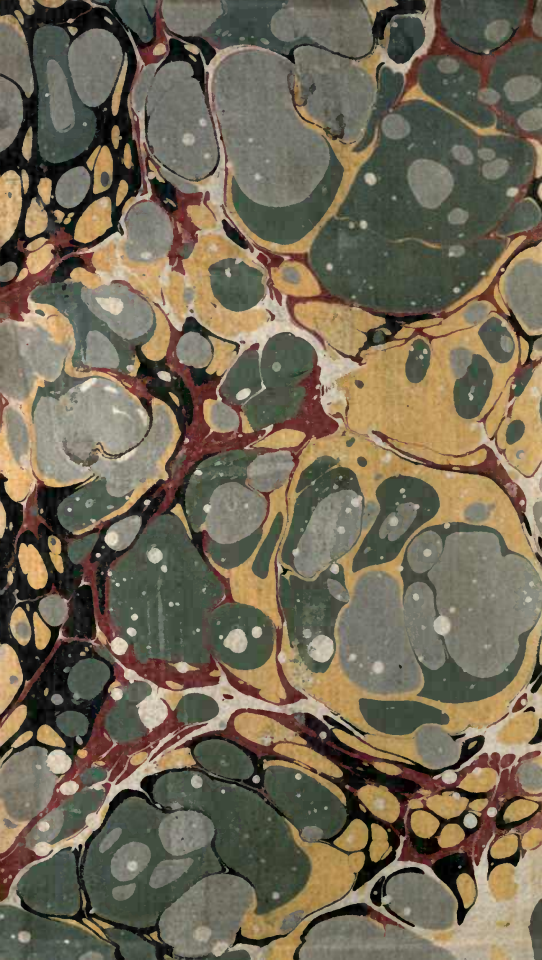


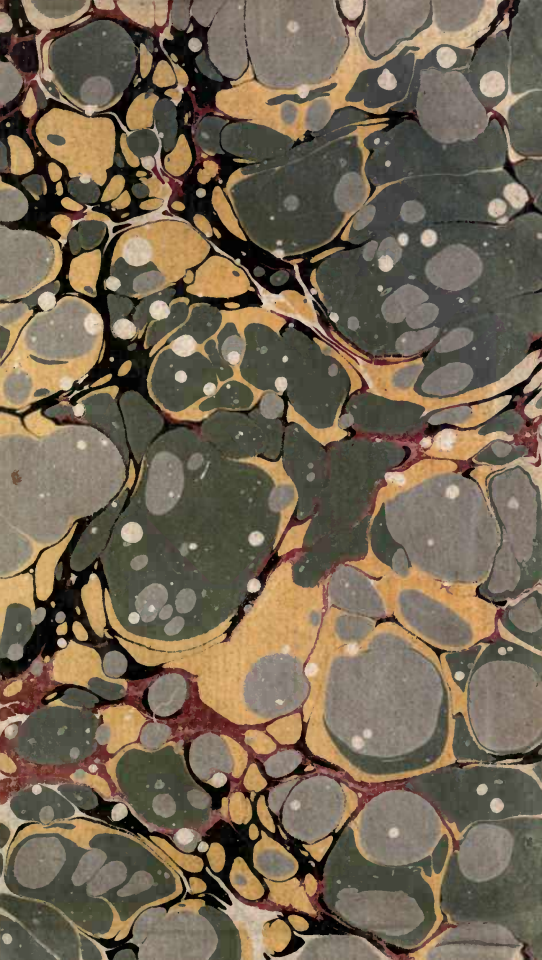
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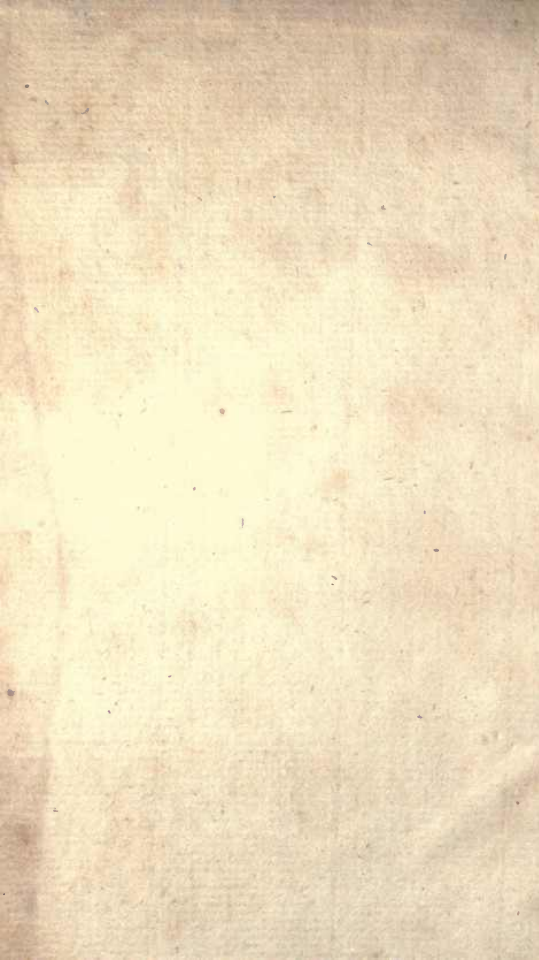




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WATTS' METHOD

EXERCISES

FOR THE

TEACHERS OF THE
WATTS' METHOD

OF THE
WATTS' METHOD

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WATTS' METHOD



CATECHETICAL EXERCISES

By CHARLES BULKLEY.

Ηνικα δει ειπειν λογον, & κατὰ το μαρτυριον μου,
 αλλα γαρ και τον καλ' ερωτησιν και αποκρυσιν.

Clement. Alex. Strom. L. vi.

Be sure to teach your children with all the sweetness and gentleness you can ; lest if you should be severe, and over-task them, religion should seem to them rather a burden than a blessing.

BISHOP KEN.

And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt TALK of them. MOSES.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. JOHNSON, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

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CATFISH

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CHARLES LUCKLEY

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P R E F A C E.

THE author of the following sheets has always considered himself as being accountable both to God and his fellow-creatures for the use that he makes of his time, and of any slender powers he may be possessed of: and, if he be not much mistaken, always carries about with him a brotherly and cordial affection towards human kind. and it is upon this principle that he has ventured them abroad; hoping that they may possibly be of some use towards suggesting a method of catechetical instruction that may at least have its advantages among the rest for the improvement of younger minds. he would by no means depreciate from the well known performances of others in this department:

nor even allows himself to imagine, that those which may perhaps seem to some to be too childish even for children themselves, must needs be without their use. he cannot however but be of opinion that in one period or another of early life this mode of instruction should be so conducted, as to be to the pupil himself an exercise of his own rational and mental powers, and not merely a declaration of what others have to say. this has too much the air of authoritie; and too great a tendencie towards leading the younger sort into an apprehension, that religion has no other foundation than that of venerable custom and parental discipline. and though it may serve to awe their minds for the present, it is well if afterwards it have not a very different effect. especially if in the very manner of proceeding upon these occasions a certain severe and rigid form be too strictly adhered to. to prevent which, and in order to give to
this

P R E F A C E.

v

this exercise a more chearful, manly and sociable appearance, it should be permitted sometimes at least, to intermingle itself with the other religious offices belonging to a family; and with some more general addresses upon a topic of this nature; and, as apt occasion may offer, in some sort, and in a more transient way, into freer conversation. by this means a way will be made for those other catechetical treatises not so immediately calculated for the initiatory discipline. such I mean as those of OSTERVOLD, USHER, BAXTER, HAMMOND. treatises of this kind have certainly their distinct use, all else being as nearly alike as may be, as at little intervals of leisure, or upon particular occasions they may more readily and profitably be consulted. besides that in writings of this construction, there is a natural tendency to lead the reader into that most useful practice of soliloquy and self-examination, which, where there is any thing
of

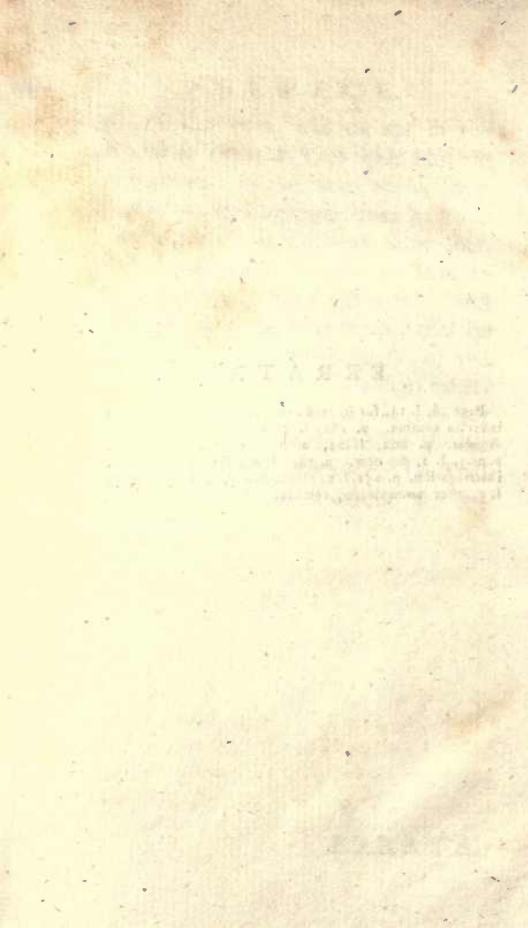
P R E F A C E.

of a serious turn, will be apt in the perusal of them to steal upon him ere he is aware. in the mean while, some of our smaller catechisms may be made occasionally to accompany some such plan of instruction as that we have in the following lectures exhibited. and the author has only here to add, that he has such a thorough conviction of the high importance and sovereign excellency of religion, that should they but in the least degree contribute to the promoting of its influence, he shall think himself well rewarded for the publication.

ERRATA.

ERRATA.

Page 46, l. 14, for *is*, read *arē*. p. 174, l. 23, *dele* the inverted comma. p. 188, l. 5. *note*, for *eliscimus*, read *discimus*. p. 202, l. 24, after *character*, a full stop. p. 203, l. 1. *dele* now. p. 244, l. 20, after *heightned*, an interrogation. p. 251, l. 2, before *seeking*, read *the*. p. 267, l. 5, after *contemplations*, comma.



CATECHETICAL EXERCISES.

LECTURE I.


WE are now in pursuance of a design, LECT. I.
of which some general account has
been already given, to enter upon such a
consideration of the grounds and princi-
ples of religion, as may, it is hoped, be
especially useful towards leading the younger View.
part of our societie into a just and becoming
sense of it; and contribute at the same
time towards impressing the minds of all
with more affecting and lively apprehen-
sions of it's nature and importance. a ca-
pacitie for religion is the distinguishing
B excel-

LECT. I. excellencie of human nature, it is that by

which we rise in eminence of being above the brute creation. whatever other traces of reason may be thought apparent in any of these; it is man alone among all the inhabitants on this earthly globe, that has it in his power to be religious. now to know and worship, to contemplate and rejoice in, to imitate and obey the great author of our being, this is religion. such then the high and glorious employment, for which we are by nature fitted. such the privileges even of our present being; which thankfully embraced and duly improved, will terminate ere long in the complete felicitie of heaven itself. yet how small and inconsiderable a share has religion in the education of our children and of our youth. if it makes any part at all of it, and be not absolutely discarded, with what carelessness and superficial formalitie is it treated, as if among all the branches of education it was by far the meanest and most insignificant. and then in after life that ignorance in every thing relative to religion, that is so justly to be imputed to the gross and shameful negligence of a parent, is usually ascribed to the stupiditie,

dullness

dullness and perverseness of nature. so LECT. I.
 readie are we in this, as in so many other
 instances besides, rather to throw the blame
 upon God than upon ourselves. But why
 must it be thought a thing incredible, that
 even children should be capable of under-
 standing the principles and duties of reli-
 gion? if it be a capacitie at all belonging
 to man as such, it must needs be originally
 inherent in our minds when children, and
 want only to be properly cultivated and deduced
 and in due time put upon it's natural exer-
 cise and use. parents think their children
 well enough capable of understanding the
 dutie, which they are owing to themselves, Filial duty.
 and are apt to be somewhat angry with
 them, if they appear not to do so. why
 then should they be thought unable to form
 the proper notion or idea of that, which
 is owing from them to their heavenly
 father? it consists in the very same kind of
 obligations, though infinitely heightened
 according to the infinite transcendencie of
 that sovereign being, who is the object of
 it. and even the foundation of these duties
 they may surely understand, were their
 thoughts but properly directed that way in
 the one case as well as in the other. a child

LECT. I.  very soon comes to apprehend that he is in some manner or another indebted to a parent for his being. may he not be made sensible that in a much stricter sense he has derived it from God? he soon comes to know that his father and mother have an authoritie over him, and have a right to command him. would it not be easie for a parent to lay hold upon this conviction in such a manner as to lead him into the rational apprehension, that God must have a still higher authoritie over him, and a still superior right to his obedience? how soon does a child, that has not very early indeed been corrupted, come to be persuaded, that he ought to love his parents on account of the blessings and benefits he has received from them? and can it be a matter of any great difficultie to convince him that he is under far higher obligations to the goodness and care of that sovereign deity who made him? these reasonings and illustrations I have introduced as a kind of specimen of the manner in which the subject we have proposed to treat upon, may be adapted to the capacities of children; and yet this in perfect consistencie with the rational grounds of religion in itself. for the

the

EXERCISES.

5

the stronger and more forcible any reason- LECT. I.
ing, so much the more easily is it to be Capacitie.
discerned by every capacitie. so that reli-
gion being founded upon the plainest and
most convineing arguments, upon the
strongest and most demonstrative reason-
ings, must on that account be so much the
more easily inculcated in the rational na-
ture of it, even upon the young and tender
mind. you see what a copious subject we
have undertaken; a subject in which those
of all parties are alike concerned. since it
is by the first and fundamental principles of
religion that all particular controversies are
to be decided; and were there no sufficient
foundation for religion in the general na-
ture and idea of it, all our partie disputes
must be at an end of course. but more par-
ticularly still, as to the subjects we propose
to treat of; they are first, a deitie, his be-
ing, his attributes, his providence; and Topics.
with respect to this last it's realitie, it's na-
ture as a plan of moral government, it's
extent, it's views. secondly, man, his
origin, his nature, his connexions, the end
of his creation, his happiness, his dutie,
his present situation, natural and moral;
and his character in general. thirdly, a

LECT. I. future state; and the hope and expectations of mankind in relation to it. fourthly, the christian religion, it's design, it's evidences, principles, usefulness and duties. in treating upon the several topics of religion as founded in reason and nature I shall take frequent occasion to illustrate them by the language and maxims of the scriptures, tho' their authoritie and evidence come not till afterwards distinctly to be considered. in the mean time by this manner of proceeding, we shall have as we go along, and before we touch directly upon that particular, one considerable argument in favor of the scriptures, namely, their harmony and agreement with natural religion; a point so considerable indeed, that were it wanting, nothing could be sufficient to establish their authoritie, nor any other reasonings whatsoever amount to a proper and satisfactory evidence in favor of them. and as to the duties in particular of religion, I shall shew how they arise out of each truth or principle of it as I go along. and as one and the same dutie has oftentimes a foundation in several different truths or principles of religion, these distinct grounds of that particular dutie will be pointed out under

E X E R C I S E S.

7

under each. after which a summarie of LECT. I.
those duties, according to all the united
force of obligation derived from these several
principles, may we apprehend with the most
propriety, and advantage be introduced.

As religion has such an ample and strong
foundation in truth and nature, we cannot
but conclude, that effects of a proportion-
able kind, and in the highest degree con-
ducing to the good of mankind would arise
from the profession of it, were such a pro-
fession attended with proper ideas, and
distinct conceptions of it's nature and im-
portance in the mind. but here lies our
grand defect; and the reason why we see so
little either of the love, or of the fruits of
religion; and why there is so little zeal
among us either for its purity or its pre-
valencie, is that we give so little attention
to it's fundamental principles, and to those
reasons, which are with such force and
evidence to be assigned in favor of it. but
here, whilst we are talking of religion and
making mention of that deity, whose
being is the ground, and whose perfections
are the object of it, some of those children
perhaps, whose interest in this design I
have so much at heart, may be ready to ask,

Lect. I. " but where is the God you speak of, a

" God my maker ? I have often *heard of*
 " *him with the hearing of the ear* ; I have
 " heard my parents talk of such a being ;
 " and on a certain day of every week I
 " hear much discoursed of concerning
 " him : but methinks I should be extremely
 " glad if mine eye could see him ; and, if
 " I cannot see him, how is it that I am
 " to be made sensible that there is such
 " a being ? why, pray, my dear child,
 " did you ever see the king ? no. but
 " you believe, I suppose, that there is a
 " king of England ? yes, sir, I have no
 " doubt of that. why then, may you not
 " reasonably believe that there is a God,
 " though you have never seen him ? I can-
 " not say, sir, that I am altogether satisf-
 " fied with your argument ; because, tho'
 " I have not myself ever seen the king,
 " I have heard of, and been in company
 " of those that have seen him, but I never
 " heard of, or have met with any one
 " that has seen God. nay, I have been
 " told that no body *can see him* ; and I have
 " read the same in the bible. but pray,
 " did you ever hear of any body that had
 " seen the wind, that often makes such a
 " rustling

Deitie in-
 visible,

“ rustling noise in the streets, that raises LECT. I.
 “ the dust of the ground aloft into the air,
 “ and sometimes shakes the very houses in
 “ which we sit; and yet you believe that
 “ there is such a thing as the wind, and
 “ that there are a great many events
 “ and accidents to be ascribed to it, tho’
 “ neither you nor any one else have seen
 “ it. indeed, sir, I cannot say that I am
 “ quite satisfied yet. why so? because,
 “ tho’ I never *saw* the wind, yet I often
 “ *hear* it; and that convinces me as much
 “ that there is such a thing, as if it were
 “ to be the object of my sight; but of
 “ God I must say, that I have not *heard*
 “ *his voice at any time*, any more than *seen*
 “ *his shape*. why then, my dear child, let
 “ me ask you, did you ever think? O yes.
 “ I am always thinking about something
 “ or another. but do you apprehend
 “ that there is any man or woman in the
 “ world that can *see* you think, or *hear*
 “ you think? no; that is impossible. but
 “ yet you would look upon it to be very
 “ strange, if any bodie should deny that
 “ there was such a thinking being in the
 “ world as you, because they could neither
 “ *see*, nor *hear* your thoughts. Indeed, I
 “ should

LECT. I. “ should imagine him to be quite mad and
 “ out of his wits. If you then can think
 “ without being *seen* or *heard* to think, can
 “ you not easily suppose, that there may be
 “ some other thinking being, that neither
 “ you nor any one else can *see* with the
 “ *bodily* eye? for, tho’ you have a body,
 “ yet your thoughts are no more to be
 “ seen, than if you had no body at all. (a)
 “ your thoughts therefore, and your think-
 “ ing power are quite distinct from your
 “ bodie. you can then surely apprehend,
 “ that there may be some thinking being
 “ existing, that has not a bodie, because
 “ you plainly perceive that it is not with
 “ your bodie that you yourself do think.
 “ as it is not therefore your bodie that
 “ thinks, there may be some other think-
 “ ing being that has no bodie; and, if a
 “ thinking being may be without a bodie,
 “ then

(a) Est, est profecto illa vis (scil. divina): neque in his corporibus atque in hac imbecillitate nostra inest quiddam, quod vigeat & sentiat, & non est in hoc tanto naturæ tam præclaro motu. nisi forte idcirco esse non putant, quia non *apparet* nec *cernitur*: perinde quasi *nostram* ipsam *mentem*, qua sapimus, qua providemus, qua ipsa hæc agimus, ac dicimus, videre, aut plane, qualis aut ubi sit, sentire possumus. *Cicero. pro Milone.*

“ then it can be no objection to your be- LECT. I.
“ lieving in such a being, that you cannot
“ *see* him. but, tho’ I cannot *see* God,
“ yet should I not have some proof in one
“ way or another given me of his being,
“ before I admit that belief of it? why?
“ can you not take your parents word for
“ it? have they not often told you,
“ that God sees you and hears you, and
“ knows you and made you, and can bless
“ you? and is not that enough to induce
“ you to believe these things? indeed, sir,
“ I apprehend that my father and mother
“ would not believe them, if they had
“ not some *argument* or *reason* in their own
“ minds, upon which they ground that
“ belief. and as I am a being of the same
“ nature with them, I think that I may
“ be capable at least gradually and in time,
“ and having it once and again proposed
“ to me, to perceive the force of this ar-
“ gument. and I fancie too that I should
“ be better satisfied in believing that there
“ is a God, by discerning in my own mind,
“ and by the exercise of my own thoughts,
“ the reason of that belief, than by believ-
“ ing it merely upon the word of my
“ parents. besides, tho’ I might depend
B 6 “ upon

LECT. I. “ upon what my parents say, yet perhaps
 “ every bodie will not. and methinks I
 Implicit “ should be quite ashamed, were any one
 faith. “ to ask me, why I believed that there was
 “ a God, and I could give no other reason,
 “ than because my father and my mother
 “ told me there was such a being. why
 “ should you be ashamed of that ? because
 “ I am a reasonable creature ; and I think
 “ it must be a shame for a reasonable crea-
 “ ture to believe any thing without a rea-
 “ son. I remember too to have read in the
 “ bible, that we should be *readie to give an*
 “ *answer to every man that may ask of us a*
 “ *reason of the hope that is in us.* that must
 “ mean, to be sure, a proper, that is, a
 “ rational answer, or some convincing ar-
 “ gument upon which I build my hope ;
 “ or my belief in God and the doctrines
 “ of religion. I think it is St. Peter that
 “ lays down this rule in one of his epistles.
 “ you seem, my child, to have a great re-
 “ gard for the scriptures, and to be a good
 “ deal acquainted with them ; and I could
 “ give you many reasons, for my being
 “ extremely glad that you are so. but
 “ now that we have mentioned the scrip-
 “ tures, pray could you not prove the point
 “ we

LECT. I.
 “ we have been speaking of; the existence
 “ of a God or of a deitie out of these?
 “ indeed, fir, I have met with many noble
 “ and charming descriptions of God and
 “ of his works in the scriptures. but then
 “ I am told that these scriptures are the
 “ word of God. now before I can believe
 “ any thing to be the word of God, I must
 “ know that there is a God; for if there
 “ be no God, there can be no word of
 “ God; so that I think I must prove by
 “ some other arguments, that there is a
 “ God, and then that the scriptures are
 “ the word of God. from whence then
 “ would you derive your arguments? I
 “ think, fir, it must be from what I have
 “ heard called the light of nature. the
 “ light of nature, child! why, what do
 “ you mean by that? I hope, fir, I shall
 “ be able to give you some account of it,
 “ when we meet again.”

LECTURE II.

LECT. II. **I**N our former interview upon this occasion we endeavoured to shew you, that, as there is certainly such a thing as thought, tho' it be not the object of our bodily senses, it does from thence necessarily follow, that there may be a thinking being, who is not to be discerned by any of those senses, since thought necessarily implies the existence of some thinking mind, in which it inheres, or of some thinking being, to whom it is belonging, and whose it is. and by this means we designed to obviate what may possibly be one of the first difficulties occurring to the mind of a child relating to the grand question, whether or no there be a God, who made him and the rest of the human species. and as much as we may be inclined to value ourselves upon being above such childish prejudices, yet many of riper years may not be altogether free from some such influence as this. and it is highly necessary for all to accustom themselves to such reflexions, as may tend in the most effectual manner to impress their minds with

with a sense of a really existing deitie, and of his presence with us, notwithstanding his invisibilitie. and having thus gone through the first and lowest step in this argument, by shewing that there may be such a being, and that the supposition carries in it no impossibilitie or contradiction to any natural notion or sentiment, it is now our purpose to procede to the direct proof and demonstration, that there actually is such a being. this has been the common belief of all mankind in every age of the world, and throughout every region of it. the most uncultivated of human kind believe the existence of a God as firmly as the best philosophers; and that upon the same general ground, and from the force of the same kind of convictions; tho' they be not able to illustrate the argument by an equal copiousness and varietie of particulars. and from this universal consent of mankind some have seemed to think that a direct and formal proof of a divine being is to be deduced. but I cannot suppose that it amounts to more than this; that there must needs be some very strong and forcible, and at the same time very obvious reasons, upon which such a belief

LECT. II. belief is founded ; and which has produced
 { Universal consent. } so universal a consent in reference to this particular, notwithstanding that almost infinite diversitie of opinion, which is in other instances so apparent. and indeed what reasoning can possibly be more forcible or evident, than that of the author of the epistle to the Hebrews : “ every house is built by
 “ some man, and he that built all things,
 “ is God ? ” now this is the sum and substance of the argument in proof of a deitie. and in this single point it is, that all the illustrations of it arising from a particular and distinct survey of the works of nature must necessarily center. and surely this is an argument which no reasonable creature can justly plead an incapacitie for understanding. is there any child, who does not in fact reason thus, upon seeing an house regularly built and divided into proper and convenient apartments ; that there must needs have been some designing cause or agent, some thinking being like himself, tho’ able to think more perfectly and wisely, that had been concerned in raising such an edifice ? “ and would not you, my child,
 “ at least be ready to laugh at any other
 “ child, and almost to call him fool or
 “ idiot,

“ idiot, who should pretend to say, that LECT. II.
“ the house had rose exactly into that re-
“ gular form and all those convenient
“ divisions by chance, and without any
“ ones knowing any thing of it, or think-
“ ing at all about it, or designing any such
“ matter ?” but how much more ridicu-
lous must it be, and how easie to discern
that it is so, to imagine, that the whole
universe itself, in which there is such a
vastly more extensive and durable scene of
perfect order and regularitie, of happy con-
trivance and useful tendencies, should have
come into being without any designing or
conscious mind ? what an amazingly use-
ful and well-contrived fabric, for instance,
is the human body ? with what regularitie
and ease do we by means of it perform the
various functions of life ? eat, drink, move
either ourselves or other bodies, see, taste
and smell ; and all with the greatest con-
venience imaginable, and in the same exact
method and order from day to day ? what
a constant and beautiful appearance of the
sun throughout each revolving year ? what
a stated order in the seasons of “ summer
“ and winter, seed-time and harvest,” and
in the production of the several fruits of the
earth,

LECT. II. earth, (a) so that every child knows when
 to expect the return of these seasons and the
 appearance of these fruits? these are general
 hints capable of being illustrated by an
 infinite varietie of particulars; and many
 useful books there are of this sort, which
 young persons might to their greatest benefit
 imagineable be conversant with. books
 which, as they contain the fullest demonstration
 of the being and perfections of the
 deitie, so there cannot be the least objection
 made to them on account of any difficultie
 in

(a) Videmus quam certæ sint leges motuum
 cœlestium, certum numerum specierum, et
 propagari similia ex similibus, non promiscuè
 alia ex aliis, videmus causas finales rerum: singula
 nascuntur ad aliquam utilitatem. est et
 mirabilis consensus superiorum et inferiorum
 corporum. motus cœlestes certas vices æstatis
 et hyemis ad utilitatem viventium efficiunt.
 quid fontium et fluminum perennitas? quid
 in corpore humano partium singularum distributio?
 quid ipsa numeri et ordinis agnitio? nonne
 testantur clarè hanc naturam non extitisse
 casu, sed ab aliqua æterna mente ortam esse?
 impossibile est enim hæc semper ita fieri casu.
 impossibile est notitias numeri et ordinis casu
 aut ex materia tantum ortas esse. o cæcas hominum
 mentes, quæ tam perspicuis argumentis,
 tam expressis vestigiis divinitatis non moventur;
 ut melius de deo sentiant et eum revereantur.

McLanct. in Epist. ad Rom. c. i. p. 166, 167.

in understanding them, they being in the LECT. II.
general scope and tenor of them the most
intelligible that can be. I speak of such
books as Ray on the wisdom of God in the
creation, Derham's Physico - Theology,
Nieuentyt's Religious Philosopher, Nature
displayed, and the like. what pity it is,
that it is not a stated point to put some
such books as these into the hands of chil-
dren, or at least some well chosen extracts
from them? it would give them a great
deal of immediate light and information;
and would gradually and after the most
pleasing manner strengthen their reasoning
powers, and enlarge their intellectual and
moral views. historie is generally thought Historie,
to be a kind of reading that is best adapted
to the capacities of children, and peculiarly
proper for promoting the improvement of
their minds, and of those of the younger
sort. Now these books are no other than
the historie of God's works in creation and
providence; an historie altogether as intel-
ligible as any other whatsoever; and at the
same time infinitely greater consequences
are depending upon the truth of it. by
conversing intimately with such topics we
shall come, not so much to know and to
believe,

LECT. II. believe, as to see and feel, that there is a
 { God. I might likewise have mentioned
 some good translation, if to be met with,
 of Cambray on the existence of God; or,
 if your children must needs learn French,
 some extracts out of that book might very
 properly be put into their hands upon this
 great subject altogether as intelligible surely
 as his fables. and the reading of such
 books would be still more profitable and
 conducive to the improvement, usefulness
 and comfort of after-life, if parents by
 their own personal address and application
 would in a proper manner endeavor to pre-
 pare, and as it were, to open the soil in
 which this precious seed is to be sown.
 suppose for instance, as they so often hear
 others speak of God, and do often them-
 selves make use of that name, you were to
 begin with asking them what they mean by
 the name, term, or appellation of God.
 to this it is natural to imagine, they would
 of themselves answer, that they meant by
 it the being, who made, and who preserves
 and who governs the world. they might
 not perhaps express themselves exactly in
 these terms, but this would be the purport
 of their answer, and a better could not be
 given.

Deitie

what.

given. in many writings, and I believe LECT. II.
in most catechisms, all the attributes and
perfections of God are enumerated, as ex-
plicative of the name or term itself, and
as making a part of it. thus in one cate-
chism, to the question what is God, I find
the answer to be, " God is a spirit, infi-
nite, eternal, and unchangeable in his
being, wisdom, holiness, justice, good-
ness, and truth." in another, the an-
swer which I find to be given to the same
question is; " God is a spirit perfectly
holy, infinite in wisdom and knowledge,
in power and in presence, necessary and
eternal in his existence, and unchange-
able in his blessedness." Now this I
apprehend is throwing too many ideas at
once into the mind of a child. nor is it,
I presume, a thing even so proper in itself,
according to the very nature of the subject
treated of. for the word God is a relative
term, and, if there be a creator and go-
vernor of the world, there is a God, what-
ever be the moral character or other attri-
butes of that being. these are a matter of
after consideration; in the mean time, the
answer which would naturally occur to the
mind of a child in the first place, upon be-
ing


LECT. II. ing asked what he meant by the word
 God, is the best; that he understood by it
 the being who made and preserves the
 world. and it is the same in effect with
 that explication, idea, or notion of it that
 has been given by the noble author of the
 characteristics: "whatsoever, as he ex-
 presses it, is superior in any degree over
 the world, or rules in nature with dis-
 cernment and a mind, is what by uni-
 versal agreement men call God." the
 next question then proper to be put to the
 child is, why he believes that there is such
 a being. "and here, my dear child, you
 remember, that in the last conversation
 we had together upon the subject, you
 told me that the existence of a God
 must be proved by the light of nature;
 and you promised to inform me what
 you meant by that expression; will you
 now make that promise good? I will
 endeavor it. what then do you mean by
 the light of nature? by the light of
 nature, sir, I mean all those conclusions
 which I am led to make, or principles
 which I am induced to embrace upon
 the subject of religion by the reasoning
 of my own mind from what I see or
 know

Light of
 nature.

“ know to exist, independently of any in- LECT. II.
 “ formation that is given me by the scriptures }
 “ or the bible. the light of nature then
 “ you say, is all that you can reasonably
 “ believe in matters of religion, without
 “ having recourse to the bible; or it de-
 “ notes all the arguments and reasonings
 “ that you can make use of in support of
 “ your belief in these matters, without re-
 “ curring to that book. and do you think
 “ that by this light of nature you can
 “ prove the being of a God? I am ready
 “ to think so; and if I am not mistaken,
 “ the bible itself assures me that I may.
 “ where, I pray you, do you find any such
 “ declaration made? I think, sir, it is in
 “ St. Paul’s epistle to the Romans; where
 “ he says, that *the invisible things of God*
 “ *are clearly seen, being understood by the things*
 “ *that are made. by the invisible things of*
 “ *God,* I suppose to be meant the realitie
 “ of God’s being or existence, even tho’
 “ we cannot discern him with our bodily
 “ eyes, and by the *things that are made,*
 “ the visible things of the creation or the
 “ works of nature. but among these things Self-pro-
 “ do you include yourself? yes. but why duction.
 “ do you think that God made you?
 “ might

LECT. II. “ might not you have brought yourself
 “ into being? I think, sir, that must have
 “ been impossible: because to bring any
 “ thing into being is an act of power;
 “ and therefore I could not bring myself
 “ into being, because I could not perform
 “ any action or exert any power before I
 “ had a being. besides, if I had brought
 “ myself into being, I could certainly pre-
 “ vent my being sick or dying; but I know
 “ I cannot do that. but might not your
 “ parents give you your being? I think
 “ if they had given me my being, they
 “ could keep me here in this world as long
 “ as they pleased. but I see that other
 “ children die, notwithstanding all that
 “ their parents can do for the prefer-
 “ vation of their lives; and I suppose that
 “ might have been, or yet may be so with
 “ respect to myself; and therefore it seems
 “ very evident to me, that there must be
 “ some other being, that has more power
 “ over me than my parents, and over other
 “ children than theirs; nay, and over my
 “ parents themselves, for I find that none
 “ of my fellow-creatures, whether chil-
 “ dren or grown up to manhood, have it
 “ in their power to dispose of themselves
 “ and

Dependant
state.

“ and their affairs as they please, or to LECT. II.
 “ stay in this world as long as they like. 
 “ in short, I plainly perceive that man-
 “ kind have not either themselves or their
 “ affairs at their own command here upon
 “ earth. from whence I think it must
 “ certainly follow, either that there is
 “ some superior being, who made and
 “ governs them, or else that there was no
 “ creation, nor is now any government
 “ of the world at all; but that it came
 “ into being, and that all things happen
 “ in it by chance. what do you mean by Chance.
 “ chance? I do not mean any real being
 “ or cause by it, but only the coming to
 “ pass of this or that without thought or
 “ design, and without any cause at all.
 “ and do you think it possible that the
 “ world, the sun, the moon, the stars,
 “ the earth, with all the productions and
 “ inhabitants of it, the air, and the birds
 “ that fly in it, the sea and the fish that
 “ swim there, that all these could have
 “ come into being without some thinking,
 “ intelligent, and designing cause? no,
 “ sir; I think it to be utterly impossible.
 “ why so? because, sir, as you have but
 “ just now been saying, I plainly perceive,
 C “ that

LECT. II. “ that it requires a great deal of thought
 “ and contrivance, of skill and dexteritie,
 “ to build even a single house, nay, to fit
 “ up in a proper manner any one apart-
 “ ment in it; and I am very certain that
 “ without the exprefs design, purpose, and
 “ agencie of some thinking being, such a
 “ thing could never be done. and tho’ I
 “ have some share of understanding and
 “ degree of contrivance in my own mind,
 “ yet I am very far, I am sure, from be-
 “ ing capable of executing any such design.
 “ as then the world is so vast and wide a
 “ place, as it abounds with such a prodi-
 “ gious number of conveniencies and ac-
 “ commodations of all sorts both for man
 “ and beast; as every thing is more per-
 “ fectly and exactly adapted for our use
 “ than we ourselves could have contrived
 “ it; as this immensely wide, extended
 “ scene of things is every where full of
 “ order, beauty, regularitie and usefulness,
 “ it seems to me, that it must needs be
 “ infinitely more clear and evident that
 “ there is a maker of the world, than that
 “ an house must needs have a builder;
 “ and yet of this latter I have no manner
 “ of doubt. I perceive it then to be your
 “ notion

“ notion of divine creation, that this LECT. II.
 “ beauteous and regular system of things }
 “ was at first framed and brought into
 “ being by some intelligent and designing
 “ mind. but this world, you know, has
 “ been in being, and has had the same
 “ regular and orderly appearance for a
 “ long succession of ages; can you ac-
 “ count for this continuance by the ori-
 “ ginal act of creation? or do you think
 “ a continued exertion of a divine provi-
 “ dence, and of the same active intelli-
 “ gence that first gave being to it, to be
 “ necessarie in order to account for its
 “ continued sustenance and support? I Sustenta-
tion.
 “ think, that, if God did not continually
 “ govern the world, it could not continue
 “ in its present order, notwithstanding his
 “ first creation of it. what reason have
 “ you for thinking so? because I perceive,
 “ that in a family, my own father’s, for
 “ instance, things would fall into great
 “ confusion, if he did not exercise a con-
 “ tinual care and inspection over it, not-
 “ withstanding any wise provision that he
 “ might have made at first for it’s order
 “ and good management. but I think
 “ that as the whole universe is so much
 “ more extensive than a family, and as
 “ it

LECT. II. “ it must be much more dependant upon
 “ it’s maker than a family upon it’s head,
 “ it must necessarily follow, that as a
 “ single family cannot continue in it’s
 “ due order and regularitie without a con-
 “ tinued care and inspection exercised
 “ over it, the world could not have that
 “ regular and orderly appearance it now
 “ has, and which has from the beginning
 “ been the character, form and aspect of
 “ it, without the continued providence and
 “ government of that being who first cre-
 “ ated it ; and as I cannot but believe that
 “ God made it with some design and end,
 “ and as that end cannot be answered with-
 “ out his continued preservation of it, there
 “ seems to me to be just the same reason
 “ for believing a providence as for the idea
 “ of creation.” These two arguments,
 which we have thus briefly mentioned, are
 capable of, and highly deserving a more
 particular illustration. we may then, I say,
 certainly conclude that God governs the
 world, because he made it ; for we must
 necessarily suppose that he made it with
 some view, and with regard to some deter-
 minate end. now whatever that was, the
 same view, the same reference and design
 must necessarily determine him to preserve

and to uphold it ; otherwise that end can-
not be answered. just, for example, as in LECT. II.
the making of a watch ; it is not made
merely for the sake of making of it, but
with a view to some farther end and use ;
and therefore the maker or the owner of it
has a continued care and inspection over it.
and as it would be absurd to think that any
man should make a watch, with a design
when he had finished it, to let it lie by
without any such care and inspection of it
as would be absolutely necessary in order
to its producing any effects suitable to its
original formation ; it would be vastly
more absurd to imagine that God should
create the world without a design of govern-
ing it. because without the exertion of
his power in the support, as well as in the
creation of it, what can we conclude, but
that it must immediately sink again into
nothing ? consequently we must suppose,
either that he had no end at all in creating
it, or else, that the end has not been an-
swered, both which are manifest absurdities.
Again, secondly, a divine providence is
most certainly to be infered from the actual
and present order of things ; because pre-
sent order does just as strongly demonstrate


LECT. II. present government, as the original order of the universe implies the original production of it by some designing mind. and of the two, there must, I think, be a greater absurditie in pretending to account for the continued regularitie and order of the world from the beginning to the present time, without the continued agencie of a designing mind, than in attempting to account for the first immediate existence of it without such a designing cause; the evidence apparently heightening in proportion to the permanency of the effect. so closely is the Providence. doctrine of a providence connected with the notion of creation. and so extremely foolish and ridiculous was that argument which some sceptics of old seem to have made use of against a providence; that "all things continued as they were from the beginning;" which is a demonstration that there is a providence. and it is an argument too that is continually growing upon our hands: we have the experience of our own to add to that of every preceding age; and the longer the world continues in the same regularitie and order in which it now appears, so much the stronger will be the argument arising from that regularitie and order

order in favor of a divine providence and go- LECT. II.
 vernment in the universe. we should now
 procede to consider the nature, qualities and
 properties of this divine providence and
 rule, and the attributes and perfections of
 the divine being himself, did the time al-
 low. but we must needs refer it to the
 next opportunitie.

LECTURE III.

IN prosecution of the several subjects LECT. III.
 which we proposed to treat upon in
 this our evening exercise, we endeavored at
 our last meeting upon the occasion, to give
 you a brief view and illustration of those
 great topics, the creation of the world and
 the providence of God. in respect to this
 latter point we observed that the realitie of
 a divine providence exercised over the
 world, was most certainly to be infered
 even from the creation of it. for, as cre-
 ation necessarily implies some end proposed
 by the creating deitie, whatever we imagine
 that end to have been, we cannot but sup-
 pose

LECT. III. pose it to be an exactly equal motive for

 exercising a subsequent providence over the world as for the original production of it. we likewise observed that the same truth was most clearly to be deduced from the present actual order of the world, and that regularitie of things that has subsisted for such a long succession of years and ages. since it is altogether as absurd to imagine, that the present order of the world should be the effect of chance, or not procede from some designing mind, as that it could have been constituted at first in so regular and orderly a manner without some designing cause. these reasonings we endeavored to illustrate by the similitude of a watch. that which particularly led us to the making use of this comparison was not then specified, but we will mention it now. it is a comparison that has, as we apprehend, been sometimes applied in such a manner, as to weaken the argument in favor of a divine providence, instead of strengthening or illustrating it. it has been said, that, as a watch-maker can make a watch, so as that it shall perform it's regular movements without his future inspection or care of it, we cannot suppose, unless by imputing some kind

Watch.

kind of imperfection to the divine being, LECT. III.
that he could not in the original production of that system of things which we call the world, or nature, or the universe, impress such laws of motion and activitie, such a force and energie upon its component parts, as that it should so long as he pleases, continue to answer the end of its creation by virtue of this originally impressed force, without standing in need of his immediate agency for the direction and government of it. but, tho' a watch-maker can make a watch that possibly may not require any farther care or inspection of his, yet this is only upon supposition that somebody else, the purchaser for instance, undertake to keep it in due order. and what, I pray, would a watch or any other mechanical production be good for, that nobody was to take care of? so that the similitude, instead of proving what it is generally brought to prove, that there is no necessitie, namely, for any immediate agency of the deitie in the preservation of the universe, but that this may be very well accounted for by the powers originally impressed upon the severall parts of it; rather proves the direct contrary, and shews that a divine care and inspection

LECT. III. is altogether as needful for the support and continuation of the order and regularitie of the world, as a divine power and energie to account for the first production of it. but still it may be said, that a watch will go, for some time at least, without any one's taking care of it. why then may not the universe, the production of a divine power and energie, be supposed to continue answering the ends of it's original formation for a thousand years or any longer period in exact regularitie and order by virtue of some original impressions, without needing the immediate super-intendencie and care of it's creator? but here again I must deny the truth of the assertion, that a watch can go even for a single moment without any one's taking care of it. for the art of man exerted in any of these mechanical operations, consists not in giving new laws of motion to matter, but only in accommodating those which naturally belong to it to such and such particular uses. so that every single movement of a watch depends as much upon a divine agencie supporting and maintaining the general and natural laws of motion, as even the revolution of the planets. nay, without this divine agencie


agencie the parts of which it is composed LECT. III.
 could not so much as adhere to one another; but, if they did not instantly sink into nothing, would however immediately fly asunder into an infinity of atoms. for cohesion is no essential propertie of matter. Cohesion;
 this consists of particles infinitely divisible. those which compose a piece of metal are in themselves as distinct and separable, as those which make up a heap of sand; and their closer union the effect only of a divine and perpetually exerted power. in short, without this power you can no more account for the cohesion of the parts of matter, than you can for the motion of it. and every grain of sand is in fact a proof of a deitie. in every such grain there is an infinitie of particles of matter naturally divisible from one another. what then can be the cause of their coherence and juncture, but a power constantly impressed upon them by some voluntarie, designing agent? and having thus vindicated that representation of things which was laid before you in our last discourse, let us now procede to what we proposed for being more directly the subject of this. and that was as you remember, the attributes of

LECT. III. God, and the qualities and properties of his providence. the divine attributes have generally been divided in speaking of them into those which are natural, and those which are moral. but I have sometimes wished, that the distinction intended, and for which there is a real foundation, could have been however in some other manner expressed. for by these terms of distinction some may be led to imagine, that the moral attributes of deitie are not so essential to his being, as those which we denominate by calling them natural. whereas in truth God is altogether as essentially holy and just and merciful and good as he is powerful, wise or incorporeal. his moral attributes are as truly natural (a) attributes, as those which we distinguish by

Divine attributes

how

(a) It is very justly and accurately observed by Epiphanius, that “ creation did not proceed from mere will alone in deitie, as if “ any kind of reasoning or deliberation had “ been for that purpose employed, but according to the *essential goodness* of his nature;” agreeably to which all his attributes and properties are to be considered. ουκ απο βουληματος μονον—αλλα κατα το αυτοαγαθον—P. 959, Vol. I. and to the same purpose, *ib.* αυτοαγαθοτης ἕνεκα και αυτουσια επικεινωνοντα τοις εἰς αυτην εἰς οὐτως κτισθῆναι—

by that appellation: but then they are LECT. III.
 moral too; whereas those other are not so. 
 and this is the proper meaning of the
 distinction. There is no moral excellencie
 in being eternal or almightie or self-exist-
 ent, but in being holie and good there is.
 there is likewise a natural foundation for distinguish-
 another distinction sometimes applied to ed.
 the divine attributes; that I mean of
 communicable and incommunicable. yet
 we cannot properly make use of it in the
 room of the former. because some of those,
 which we call the natural attributes of the
 deitie are communicable, as well as those,
 which we so justly distinguish by the name
 of moral. and God has in fact communi-
 cated some degrees of power and know-
 lege, the image and resemblance of his own
 power and of his own knowlege. neither
 yet can we substitute in room of the di-
 stinction spoken of, so as fully to answer
 to the meaning of it, that of imitable and
 inimitable; because some of those we call
 the

πρὸς θεοῦ—so *ἡ φύσις ἀγαθότης* is the character of
 the divine goodness, *ap.* Basil. Vol. I. p. 499.
 D. and says Mr. Baxter (*Life of Faith*) p. 179,
 all the good which God does, he doeth it from
 the goodness of his nature.

LECT. III. the natural attributes of the deitie are imitable as well as his moral perfections. thus we imitate the power of deitie, by every exertion of that power, with which we ourselves are endued. and by all our improvements in knowlege we gain a somewhat nearer, tho' still an infinitely distant, resemblance to his perfect knowlege. retaining then the former distinction, let us be careful in remembering, that when we speak of the natural and moral attributes of the deitie, there is no intention to intimate that the latter are not natural, but only that they are moral likewise. “ and
 “ now my little children, in whom *I can*
 “ *have no greater joy than to hear of your*
 “ *walking in the truth* as you advance in
 “ years and to contribute any thing that
 “ is in my power towards your doing so;
 “ can you tell me, which of the divine
 “ attributes are to be called natural, and
 “ which are to be distinguished by the
 “ name of moral? indeed, sir, I am afraid
 “ I cannot. you remember, no doubt, often
 “ to have heard of God as being eternal
 “ and almighty and all-wise; and of his
 “ being holy and pure and just and good
 “ and merciful. now can you not tell me,
 “ which

“ which of these are to be called his moral LECT. III.
 “ attributes, and which not, but only to
 “ be styled natural? I know, sir, you will
 “ not be displeased at my giving the best
 “ account I can of this matter, even tho’
 “ it should be a very mistaken one; and
 “ that where I am in the wrong you will
 “ inform me better. I will therefore ven-
 “ ture, if you please, to tell you what my
 “ thoughts are concerning it. I think
 “ then those must be God’s moral attri-
 “ butes, for which I love him. and why
 “ do you love God? I love him, because
 “ he is good and kind and merciful in
 “ preserving and in taking care of me and
 “ of all mankind; because he never wrongs
 “ or injures any of his creatures in the
 “ least degree whatsoever; and because
 “ I believe him to be so very good and
 “ kind, that I may depend upon it that
 “ nothing will ever take place in his deal-
 “ ings towards them but what is for their
 “ good. I think you have expressed your-
 “ self properly and justly. and according
 “ to the account you have given, I per-
 “ ceive that you look upon God’s good-
 “ ness, and mercy, holiness and justice as
 “ being his moral attributes; for these
 “ alone

LECT. III. “ alone are, I dare say, the things that
 “ you approve of in any of your fellow-
 “ creatures. and you say that these are the
 “ qualities for which you love the deitie.
 “ but suppose that God had been a being
 “ eternal, all-wise and infinitely powerful,
 “ but yet had not provided for the welfare
 “ and good of his creatures; but had em-
 “ ployed his power and his wisdom in
 “ making them unhappy and miserable;
 “ just as tyrannical kings here on earth
 “ exercise their power and use all their
 “ dexteritie and skill in doing things very
 “ cruel and barbarous: you could not
 “ perhaps in that case have loved him,
 “ notwithstanding his being eternal and
 “ all-wise and infinitely powerful. indeed
 “ I think I could not; for then I might
 “ likewise love a wicked, cruel tyrant,
 “ that takes a pleasure in enslaving, tor-
 “ menting and killing mankind. it should
 “ seem then according to this account,
 “ that God’s eternitie and omnipresence
 “ and infinite wisdom and power must be
 “ those which we are to call his natural
 “ (a) attributes. that is what I mean, sir,
 “ and

(a) After all it is to be remembered that the words nature, natural, and the like, must needs be

“ and I shall be able I think for the future LECT. III.
 “ to recollect this distinction, and to form
 “ an idea of it, only by considering what
 “ it is for which I love the deitie. the
 “ omnipresence of God I think you just Omnipre-
 “ now spoke of, I do not remember that sence.
 “ you mentioned it before ; pray what is
 “ it that you mean by that expression ? I
 “ mean by it that he is every where pre-
 “ sent ; that there is nothing done or said,
 “ designed or thought of, that happens or
 “ comes to pass in this world of ours or
 “ in any part of the universe, which he
 “ does not immediately perceive, and is
 “ not most exactly acquainted with, so
 “ that he needs not to be informed of any
 “ thing by any other being, having by his
 “ own direct and immediate inspection and
 “ intuition a perfect knowlege of all things.
 “ O sir, there is I remember, a passage in
 “ the Psalms, which represents this mat-
 “ ter, not only better than I can represent
 “ it, but according to my apprehension in
 “ a manner far better than any in which
 “ I have ever found it spoken of besides.
 “ I never

be but very improperly applied to the deitie,
 necessarily carrying in them as they do the idea
 of derivation and production into being.

LECT. III. “ I never read that passage of scripture,
 “ but it seems some how or another to fill
 “ my mind with great ideas and concep-
 “ tions, and to raise and elevate my un-
 “ derstanding. you will oblige me very
 “ much, my dear child, if you will re-
 “ peat the passage you refer to, and which
 “ seems by your manner of speaking of it
 “ very much to have affected you. it has
 “ indeed, sir. and I very well remember
 “ it is at the beginning of the hundred
 “ and thirty-ninth Psalm. I have been so
 “ much pleased with it and have read it
 “ over so often, that I have gotten it by
 “ heart. *O lord, thou hast searched me and*
 “ *known me. thou knowest my down-sitting*
 “ *and mine up-rising ; thou understandest my*
 “ *thoughts afar off. thou compasses my path*
 “ *and my lying down, and art acquainted*
 “ *with all my ways. for there is not a word*
 “ *in my tongue, but lo, o lord, thou knowest it*
 “ *altogether. thou hast beset me behind and*
 “ *before, and laid thine hand upon me. such*
 “ *knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is*
 “ *high, I cannot attain unto it. whither*
 “ *shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither*
 “ *shall I flee from thy presence ?*” this doc-
 trine of the divine omnipresence, tho’ in
 the

the idea or notion of the thing itself some-LECT. III.
what too mighty for the grasp or compass
of our understanding, yet in the proof
and certainty of it is extremely obvious.
for no being can act where it is not. every
exertion of power must necessarily sup-
pose the presence of some being or an-
other in that part of space where it is ex-
erted. and therefore as God exercises a
power over all nature, he must of neces-
sity be actually and immediately present to
every part of nature. we can indeed di-
rect or order things to be done by another,
where we are not; but then it is by sub-
stituting the *presence* of that other in the
room of our own. and tho' numbers of
inferior agents are no doubt employed in
carrying on the affairs of divine provi-
dence, yet the *presence* of the first and
supremely ruling cause in nature must be
necessary in order to the support of these
in being and in action, wherever it is that
they act. so that the ministration of these
inferior agents does no way exclude the
necessity of supposing God's universal pre-
sence, in order to account for his uni-
versal providence; these very beings them-
selves standing in need of his providential
sup-

LECT. III. support and all-sustaining energie. “ but

“ to you younger ones let me once more
 “ address myself on this head. you have
 “ seen what is the just and rational account
 “ of God’s omnipresence ; his presence
 “ in all places, and with all men ; his
 “ most exact and intimate acquaintance
 “ with all things and with all events. but
 “ might you not, think you, farther infer
 “ from it some observations and rules that
 “ may be useful for the regulation and go-
 “ vernment of your own temper and
 “ actions. when you are in company
 “ with some person of rank and figure
 “ in the world, are you not particularly
 “ careful not to be rude in your be-
 “ havior ? suppose you were to be ad-
 “ mitted into the presence of the king,
 “ would you not be very strictly upon
 “ your guard not to do any thing that
 “ should displease or appear to carry in it
 “ any slighting thoughts of him or disre-
 “ spect to him ? but God is always with
 “ you ; and he is greater than the greatest
 “ of earthly kings. he is *the king of kings*
 “ *and lord of lords*. besides, he is infinitely
 “ good ; or rather indeed in this moral
 “ excellence of character must true great-
 “ ness

“ nefs be supposed alone to consist. the LECT. III.
 “ divine being is *glorious in his holiness*.
 “ and with respect to human kind the
 “ poet’s maxim must ever stand confessed ;
 “ that where virtue is wanting nobilitie
 “ must be in vain pretended to (a). and
 “ I suppose my dear child, that the higher
 “ opinion you have of the goodness and
 “ excellent character of any of your fel-
 “ low-creatures, so much the more solici-
 “ tous you are not to say or do any thing
 “ amiss in their presence. especially, if
 “ they are not only highly good and
 “ virtuous in their own character, but
 “ have also been very good and kind to
 “ you. Should you not then be always
 “ upon your guard against offending God,
 “ and take the strictest care not to do so ?
 “ since he is always present with you. by
 “ no means may you think yourself at
 “ liberty to sin, to tell a lye for instance,
 “ or to take into your possession any
 “ thing that does not belong to you,
 “ merely because no human being can hear
 “ or see you. but I observe that in every
 “ answer, which you give me to the ques-
 “ tions that I propose to you upon this
 “ head,

(a) — Nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus.

LECT. III. "head, you speak only of one God. do
 " you believe that there is but one? yes,
 " fir, I believe in one only living and su-
 " preme God. and pray what is your
 " reason for this belief? I find that with-
 " out supposing the existence of one God
 " I cannot give any rational account of
 " the appearances of things. I cannot
 " without this account for my own won-
 " derful frame and constitution, nor for
 " the order and regularitie, which I see in
 " every thing around me. but by this
 " belief I can account for these things
 " without supposing that there is more
 " Gods than one. to believe therefore
 " that there are more than one, would be
 " to believe without having any reason to
 " assign for the foundation of my faith."
 besides, were we to suppose two or more
 self-existing natures concerned in the
 creation of the universe, it should seem
 to follow from that puritie, equitie and
 justice, which we so naturally ascribe
 to divinitie, that each would determine
 not to defraud or injure any other, in
 relation to the equal honors that would
 on this account be owing to both or all
 of them. and upon this principle we
 may

may I think certainly conclude, that had ^{LECT. III.} there been any such pluralitie, the number of co-operating deities would have been by some natural, striking, indelible and universal signature notified to mankind. yet we see nothing in the real scene of nature but what is the reverse of this. and on all these accounts the unitie (a) of nature seems to be an ^{Divine} argument fully decisive for the belief of ^{unitie,} one only creating mind. “but does not the
 “scripture say, that *there are Gods many and*
 “*Lords many?* yes, sir, but the same scriptures say, that there is but *one God and*
 “*father of all.* and hear, o *Israel,* the lord
 “*thy God is one lord,* is a passage I remember to have read in the book of Deuteronomy. why then are other beings called
 “Gods? I imagine it must be on account
 “of some resemblance which they bear to
 “the one supreme God, either in power
 “or in wisdom or in goodness of character. besides I remember it is said in the
 “scripture, *worship him all ye Gods.* which
 “seems plainly to me to imply, that there
 “is one supreme God, whom all other beings,

(a) See this particular very happily illustrated in *Nature Displayed*, Vol. III. p. 304—12.

LECT. III. “ ings that are called Gods are bound
 “ to worship and adore as being infi-
 “ nitely above them. your notion then
 “ of the unitie of God is, that there is one
 “ single being, who is the origin and source
 “ of existence to all other beings, and who
 “ did himself derive his being from none ?
 “ that is my opinion of it.”

LECTURE IV.

LECT. IV. **V**ERY closely connected with that
 doctrine of divine omnipresence,
 which we treated of in our last evening
 exercise, is that of the divine omniscience,
 or God's knowlege of all things. “ for
 “ this I suppose my children, you know to
 “ be the meaning of omniscience. it is
 “ the knowlege of all things.” this must
 certainly be the result of the divine omni-
 presence. for a being that is actually every
 where by an immediate, spiritual pre-
 sence, must certainly have the most exact
 and intimate knowlege of whatever is
 passing or transacted, either in the external
 world.

world of nature or in the heart of man. LECT. IV.
 and by thus grounding the omniscience of God upon his omnipresence, we are led
 into the most accurate idea or notion concerning it ; at the same time that we have
 from hence arising the most undeniable proof and demonstration of it. of all that is
 passing without us, there is nothing which we ourselves know so perfectly as that, which
 is the object of our sight. and if we could with our bodily eye command the whole
 world itself, just in the same manner as we do the extent of such a place as this, most
 truly might we then say that the whole world was the object of our knowlege.
 now God in consequence of his omnipre-^{Omnipre-}sence knows every thing as perfectly as we^{sence,}
 know any thing that is before our eyes ; his knowlege of all things is not the effect
 of any investigation or application of mind, but of immediate intuition ; in the same
 manner as external objects are fully subject to our visual organs without any interven-
 ing study or labor of our thoughts. thus it is that God is “ not far from every one
 “ of us.” all creatures lie “ naked, open
 “ and manifest to his eye.” because it is
 “ in him that we and all creatures live and
 D “ move


LECT. IV. "move and have our being." but it is

here by all means to be remembered, that the divine ubiquitie or omnipresence is alike predicable with respect to duration as to space. so that the divine nature or essence is, truly speaking, co-existent with eternity. and hence arises the true account of that which is perhaps somewhat improperly called the divine prescience or fore-knowledge. that those events and transactions which are future to us, are all of them most exactly and intimately known to deity, is a thing not to be questioned. but then in order to a clear conception upon this point, it is to be carefully recollected, that tho' future to us, they are not so to deity, but that they are to him actually present (a).

Divine
fore-know-
lege what.

under

(a) "Strictly speaking, says Mr. Sturmy, "*fore-knowledge* is a term which does not suit with the perfection of the divine understanding; but it is a condescensive expression to our capacity; denoting God's certain, instant and punctual knowledge of many actions and things, which are future to his creatures. For the knowledge of creatures is gradual; and to them the drama of providence is displayed by a broken succession of parts; the infinite understanding is not like a finite understanding, whose imperfect capacity obligeth it to divide duration into *past*,
" *present*,

under this attribute too of omnipresence, ^{Lect. IV.}
 will very naturally be comprehended the 
 divine

“ *present, and future.* I say it is not thus with
 “ the understanding of God; there is no di-
 “ vision in his duration; no process in his
 “ views; no progress in his knowledge: for
 “ all duration, actions, things and persons are
 “ equally present to the infinite mind: he sees
 “ not as man sees, nor knows as man knows:
 “ he grasps all objects with one continual
 “ view, distinctly without confusion and with-
 “ out distraction. historie and remembrance,
 “ prediction and event, faith, sight and sci-
 “ ence give us a different, nay sometimes an
 “ opposite representation of the same things:
 “ but God’s ideas of all things are as one idea,
 “ simple and uniform, from everlasting to
 “ everlasting: he is the first and the last, and
 “ can declare the end from the beginning, and
 “ from ancient times the things that are not
 “ yet done.” See his Sermons, No. IV. p. 82,
 83. “ all things, says Mr. Tryon, whether
 “ past, present, or to come, appear *present* to
 “ the great eye of the eternal being.”—and
 “ again, “ the Lord sees and knows all things,
 “ for unto him there is neither *time* nor place,
 “ night nor day, but *all is essentially present*;
 “ for things in eternitie go not by degrees or
 “ by progressions as they do in time.” See his
 Discourse on Dreams and Visions, c. xii. p. 220,
 221. To the same purpose Bishop Bramhall
 in his *Castigations* of Mr. Hobbes, p. 49.
 “ every particular event that shall be unto the

LECT. IV. divine immensitie. the omnipresence of

Immensitie. God is his immensitie. and the immensitie of God is his omnipresence or ubiquitie. but how, it may be asked by some of the younger class. at least, can God be in all places at one and the same instant, or every where at once? I answer, it is evident that even we ourselves may be present in different parts of space at one and the same time. this very place for example, in which we are met, is divisible into an innumerable quantitie of distinct portions of space, yet we are present in the whole

“ end of the world is foreknown, or to speak
 “ *more properly*, is known to God from all eternitie. for in God’s knowlege there is neither before nor after, past nor to come.
 “ those things which are past or to come to us, are always present to God, whose infinite understanding (that is himself) doth encompassse all times and events in one instant of eternity, and so doth prevent or anticipate all differences of time. time is the measure of all our acts; but God’s knowlege, being infinite, is not measured but by eternity; so that which is a prescience, or a *before-hand* knowlege (as he calleth it) to us, is a present intuition with God.” *Temporalia movens (sc. Deus) temporaliter non movetur: nec aliter novit facienda quam facta: nec aliter invocantes exaudit, quam invocaturos videt. Augustin. de Civitat. Dei. L. x. C. xii. p. 584.*

whole of it, in one part of it as well as LECT. IV.
 another. what difficultie then can there
 be in conceiving that God may be present
 in the whole universe considered as one vast
 immensitie of extension, in every part of
 it perfectly clear and open to his all per-
 vading eye? “ but, my dear child, you
 “ have, I doubt not, heard of God as an
 “ eternal being, and may remember eter-
 “ nitie to be ascribed to him, when his
 “ name is solemnly celebrated and adored
 “ in *the assemblies of his saints*. whzt, I
 “ pray you, may be the idea or notion that
 “ you form of this divine attribute? it
 “ means, sir, I think, that there was no
 “ beginning of God’s being, and that Eternitie.
 “ there will never be an end of it. and
 “ this I suppose, sir, to be the reason why
 “ God is said in scripture to be the *only*
 “ *being that has immortalitie*; because, tho’
 “ there are other beings, whose existence
 “ will never have an end; such as angels
 “ and myself, my own soul, and all my
 “ fellow-creatures of the human race, yet
 “ we and all the angels had a beginning of
 “ existence. but I find it to be declared
 “ in the scriptures that God is from ever-
 “ lasting, as well as to everlasting. so

LECT. IV. “ that it appears to me according to the
 { “ doctrine of scripture to be altogether as
 “ clear and certain, that God has been al-
 “ ways, as that he will be for ever.” all
 actually existing natures must either be
 created or uncreated, derived or underived.
 nothing can be plainer than this. and is
 it not equally plain, that all cannot be
 created or derived, and that consequently
 there must be some one being, who is un-
 derived and uncreated, and independent
 for it’s existence upon any other, and the
 origin of existence to all other beings ?
 were we to say of the being that made man,
 that he had derived his being from some
 other, the question would still remain, from
 whom did that other derive his existence ;
 and so on, till we arrived in our reasoning
 to some first cause, or some being, who
 was himself derived from none. now it
 must be the very nature of such a being to
 exist, otherwise he could not exist at all ;
 any prior cause of his existence being already
 excluded. but a being, whose very nature it
 is to exist, must needs have existed always,
 or from eternitie. for had he begun to
 exist, this could only have been by a power
 of existing inherent in his own nature,
 that

Self-exist-
 ence.

that is in other words, he must have ex-^{LECT. IV.}isted before he began to exist. for were we to ascribe unto him a beginning of existence, we must necessarily impute that beginning to the exertion of some power which he had of bringing himself into being. but then this is contrary to the idea of his beginning to be. because to have a power of beginning to be, implies some actually existing being possessed of that power. so that to suppose the self-existent being, or that being whose nature is to exist, to have had a beginning of existence, is a contradiction in terms. it is to ascribe to him in the very same instant of duration, both existence and non-existence. and as he has thus derived his being from none, it immediately follows that his existence must endure "to everlasting." for there is no other being that can deprive him of his existence, since he is not at all depending upon any other being for it. so that if he ceases to be, it must be in consequence of his own essential nature, which yet has been shewn to imply being, or actual existence in the very idea of it. to suppose therefore that a self-existent being should ever cease to exist, would be to sup-

LECT. IV. pose existence and non-existence equally natural to one and the same being. as certain therefore as it is that God has derived his being from none, so certain is it that he can never cease to be ; that is, his duration must be eternal. and upon the same principles is founded the absolute immutability of his nature. as none of his attributes or perfections, all of which must necessarily enter into the very idea itself of his nature or existence, are derived from any other being, no change or alteration can possibly take place in reference to them, because that would imply some being that was the cause of such an alteration, and upon which therefore he was depending for his existence. these sentiments, which arise not so much from any medium of reasoning or chain of argument, as from a comparison of our own ideas, are most naturally and forcibly expressed in the language and style of scripture. *of old, says the Psalmist, thou, o God, hast laid the foundations of the earth. they shall perish ; but thou shalt endure. yea, all of them shall wax old as a garment ; stable and permanent as they now appear to be. but thou art the same ; and thine years shall have no end. and this*

Immutability.

this points out to us the meaning of that Lect. IV. expression, *I am that I am*; which is said in scripture to be the name of God. other beings may not be in all respects what they now are. they are liable to any change or alteration, which the supreme being, who created them, may think proper to make in their nature or quality, circumstances, situation or connexions. or he has it in his power, whenever he pleases, totally to annihilate and destroy them. but God throughout the endless ages of duration is one permanent and stably existing nature; that is, he always was, and ever will be the same he now is, without the least *variableness or shadow of turning*. but what, it may be asked, are the practical uses to be made of such reflexions as these? I answer in the first place, that the eternitie of God renders his moral perfections, his holiness, justice, goodness, veracitie and mercy in the highest degree venerable. if we attend to the natural dictates and sentiments of our own minds, we shall find that a long continuance and habit of the virtuous, that is, the godlike temper in any of our fellow-creatures, a series of many years all spent in useful, honorable actions without

LECT. IV. interruption or intermission, greatly exalts

the idea we form of any one's character. it heightens our apprehension of the dignitie and perfection of his virtue. upon this principle is founded that maxim of Solomon; *the hoarie head is a crown of glorie, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

“ when it is *found* in the way of righteousness.” not when a man begins in his

old age to think of the “ way of righteousness,” but when he is *found* in it having been long pursuing it; *found* in it as in his wonted track. and when this is the case, we cannot but form an higher idea of the virtue of such an one, on account of its permanencie and stabilitie, than of that which we discover in those of younger years. and when we rise in our thoughts from human virtue to that which is angelic, of this latter we still form a more elevated idea, when we consider that these angelic natures have for a so much longer period, for millions and millions of ages longer, been inured to the temper of virtue than any human creatures. but, if the case be so, how inexpressibly venerable and adorable must be the moral excellencies of that being who is “ from everlasting to

“ ever-

Old age.

“everlasting;” who has been for endless LECT: IV.
 ages past, and will to all eternitie be abso-
 lutely pure, holie, righteous, merciful and
 good? by considering eternitie as applica-
 ble to all these moral attributes of the deitie,
 and pursuing the reflexion with seriousness
 and devotion, we shall soon perceive them
 disclosing themselves to our intellectual and
 moral eye in far greater majestie and
 grandeur, than could possibly be the case
 without this concomitant idea. when there-
 fore we would raise our minds to the highest
 admiration of the divine holiness, let us
 remember that it is eternal holiness; of
 the divine mercie, that it is everlasting
 mercie; of divine goodness, that it is im-
 mutable and ever-flowing, yet never to be
 exhausted goodness, and if so, what intense
 and ardent, what fixed and abiding love
 must it naturally call for at our hands? if
 God be unchanging in his love to us, ought
 not we to be so in our returns of praise and
 gratitude to him? thus it is that on the
 wing of these sublime and glorious truths,
 considered in their mutual connexion and
 reference to each other, we may soar and
 range in the devout contemplation of our
 minds throughout that seemingly dark and
 D 6. mysterious.

Lect. IV. } mysterious region even of eternitie itself.
and then farther in the second place in the eternitie and immutabilitie of God, of the divine nature and of the divine attributes, we have the strongest foundation for our absolute trust and confidence in deitie. and it is a belief essentially necessary in order to our placing this intire dependance upon him. “I am the lord, he has declared by
“ his prophet, I change not, *therefore* ye
“ sons of Jacob are not consumed.” among our fellow-creatures we meet with great flexibilitie and change of temper. those who at one time seem to be all kindness, sweetness and love, so that you might think there was nothing too great to be expected from their generositie, are at another time, and perhaps after a very small intervening space, so rough and rugged, so severe and boisterous in their manners and behavior, that you would be apt to think on the other hand, that there was nothing which might not justly be feared from their displeasure. but how unspeakable the comfort to us the creatures of the sovereign deitie, of him, who is the “ father of
“ lights, the author and giver of every
“ good and perfect gift,” that his goodness
cannot

cannot for so much as a single moment be LECT. IV.
intermitted; that there cannot in any in-
stance whatsoever of his conduct towards
his creatures be the smallest deviation
from it. so that it is only in consequence
of this immutabilitie of the divine nature
that we have to say, *God is my rock and my
fortress, my high tower, my buckler and my
sure defence.* again; from the eternitie of
God a very natural, easie and convincing
argument may be drawn in proof of the
immortalitie of our own souls, and of a
never-ending existence ordained for man.

“ you are not to wonder, my dear chil-
“ dren, if what we have hitherto been
“ saying should not in all particulars ap-
“ pear to you for the present so intelligible
“ as you could wish. even the most ex-
“ alted minds cannot fully comprehend the
“ amazing glories of the divine and sove-
“ reign being; and it is a subject that will
“ please and employ us to all eternitie.
“ *canst thou by searching find out God? canst
“ thou find out the a'mightie to perfection,* are
“ questions you know, that are addressed
“ in scripture not to children only, but to
“ men too of the most mature and ripened
“ understandings; so that you are not to
“ be

LECT. IV. “ be discouraged by any thing which may
 “ be said, that at present you cannot so
 “ easily comprehend. but you are to *fol-*
 “ *low on to know the lord.* and the more
 “ you desire and love to know of him, the
 “ better will you be acquainted with him.
 “ *then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know*
 “ *the lord.* God, you have often heard it
 “ said is incomprehensible ; and a great
 “ and most certain truth it is, that he is
 “ so. and this incomprehensibilitie of the
 “ divine nature is usually and very justly
 “ enumerated among the attributes of the
 “ divine being. and you, my child, be-
 “ lieve, I doubt not, that God is incom-
 “ prehensible. but give me leave to ask
 “ you what it is that you mean when you
 “ ascribe to him such an attribute. you
 “ do not, I presume, mean by this, that
 “ you can know nothing at all of God?
 “ no, sir, but only that I cannot know
 “ him fully ; that I cannot now, nor in
 “ any farther period of my existence, know
 “ so much concerning God, but that still
 “ something more will remain to be known
 “ of him. you are not then you appre-
 “ hend on account of the incomprehensi-
 “ bilitie of God to despise that knowlege
 “ of

Deitie in-
comprehen-
sible.

“ of him, which you can attain to, or LECT. IV.
“ to discourage yourself from pursuing it; }
“ but only to learn humilitie, and to ani-
“ mate yourself in this inquirie, as you
“ grow up and improve in understanding,
“ and to increase your admiration of the
“ divine excellencies thus appearing too
“ bright, too illustrious, too perfect for you
“ to form a full and adequate idea of them.
“ I thank you, sir, for having expressed
“ my own meaning and apprehension in
“ this matter. but, my dear child, tho’
“ perhaps that particular topic we have
“ been speaking of, the eternitie of God,
“ may seem to be as much as any beyond
“ our comprehension; yet possibly by at-
“ tending a little to it, you may perceive
“ that it gives you great encouragement to
“ think, that your own and the souls of
“ your fellow-creatures of mankind will
“ survive this present state of being, and
“ are immortal. for let me ask for what
“ end was it, do you imagine, that God
“ at first brought you into being? indeed,
“ sir, I cannot conceive for what reason it
“ could be, unless it was that he might
“ make me happy. for I cannot by any
“ of my actions, or by any of the devotions
“ that

LECT. IV. " that I pay to him, be *profitable unto him,*
 " *as he that is wise is profitable unto himself,*
 " according to what I remember to have
 " met with in the book of Job. you seem
 " then to think that God is in his own
 Divine feli- " nature a perfectly happy being. indeed,
 citie. " fir, this is what I have always thought
 " concerning the deitie, since I have been
 " able to think at all upon his great and
 " awful nature. and pray what have been
 " your reasons for entertaining a sentiment
 " of this kind? I imagine, fir, that as all
 " other beings are under the controle and
 " government of the deitie, it must needs
 " be impossible that any should have it in
 " his power to disturb his felicitie. I think
 " that as he has in himself a fullness of
 " being, as he is himself the source and
 " origin of all other beings or existing
 " natures whatsoever, he either cannot
 " want any thing to make him happy, or,
 " if he could, has power in himself to
 " produce it immediately. he that can
 " make all other beings happy, must needs
 " be himself infinitely happy. you sup-
 " pose then that God could have no other
 " design in creating you than to make you
 " happy? and for the same reason, I pre-
 " sume,

“ fume, no other design in making any LECT. IV.
“ other beings like yourself, than that
“ they too might be happy? that is my
“ opinion. but you have learned, that as
“ God did at first make you, so he conti-
“ nually preserves you. and why do you
“ think he exercises all this care for your
“ preservation? I think it must be for the
“ same reason for which he made me; that
“ is, out of love. well then, if God cre-
“ ated you in order to make you happy,
“ and preserves you in being for the same
“ end; and is, as you have just been told,
“ eternal and unchangeable in all the per-
“ fections of his nature, you cannot but
“ suppose that he will continue to all
“ eternitie to have the same intention in
“ reference to your happiness. I cannot
“ but apprehend so; because if he should
“ not, there must then, I think, be some
“ change or alteration in his nature.”

LECTURE V.

LECT. V. **I**N the service of the last Monday evening we treated more distinctly of the divine eternitie, incomprehensibilitie and happines. whether there be a God or not, we cannot but have the idea of an eternal duration both past and to come. but what a joyful and triumphant reflexion is it to think that this eternal duration has been, and will be occupied and possessed by an eternal deitie of infinite goodness, wisdom and power! and on the other hand, what a chilling imagination would it be, and how confounding to all the powers of the soul, to think that in this eternal duration there never had been, and consequently never can be, any such supremely designing, intelligent and gracious mind. for if this world and all the beings that inhabit it, might at first have come into existence by chance, as is by the atheist supposed, it may likewise continue by chance, and it may chance too that thro' all eternitie there may be such rational conscious beings as mankind, and yet no gracious

cious father or friend to be their guide and guardian. who could suppose only such an eternal state of things, or rather such eternal confusion and anarchie, without the utmost horror and distress of soul ! but our prospect into futuritie, thanks to heaven, is quite the reverse. this we have endeavored distinctly to shew in our last discourse, and the sum of our argument was as follows. as every thing that has a begining must have a cause, it seems to be equally evident that what has no cause can have no begining. and to suppose that a being whose essential nature it is to exist, should ever have began to exist, is in realitie to suppose him at once existing and non-existing ; since that begining could be owing to no other cause than to the exertion of a power inherent in this very being itself to bring itself into existence. but this is to suppose it to have existed before it began to exist. the more we reflect upon it, the more clearly shall we perceive that an uncaused being must have been an eternal one, and consequently must continue existing throughout an eternitie of duration. since there is no superior being, who can have any power over an uncaused and essentially exist-

LECT. V.

LECT. V. existing nature, so as to make the least alteration even in the manner of it's existence, much less to destroy it. we shewed in particular of what great use, and of how pleasing a nature were these considerations of God's eternitie, when applied to the moral perfections and attributes of his nature. and we might have added that it is a consideration that should prodigiously heighten our gratitude for the privileges of our own being; for, tho' bestowed in time, yet have they been the matter of eternal counsels. and upon the foregoing principles in relation to the eternitie and immutabilitie of the divine nature, it must needs be evident that God has from all eternitie had thoughts of love and kindness and mercy towards us. a reflexion that gives a kind of infinite value to every blessing we enjoy. but it is likewise equally true of the divine power and wisdom, which are the subjects now to be considered, as of the moral attributes of the deitie, that they are eternal. and it is only by considering the eternitie of all these attributes in conjunction, that our joy and triumph in God can be completed. were he eternally benevolent, but not eternally powerful and wise,

wife, in that case his benevolence would be LECT. V.
equally lovely and adorable, yet we could }
not, it is evident, have the same depend-
ence upon it as now we may, for want of
an equally extended and durable power and
corresponding wisdom, by which it might
execute it's gracious purposes. but, when
we reflect that it is one and the same being
that is eternally benevolent, eternally wise
and powerful, there is then nothing want-
ing to render our joy and confidence in God
secure and complete. and with these con-
victions deeply possessing our minds, we
may procede with full satisfaction and in-
expressible delight to the more distinct con-
sideration and survey of these several attri-
butes themselves. first then, in relation to
the wisdom of God. " I need not, I sup-
" pose, my dear children, inform you what
" wisdom is. I doubt not but you have Wisdom.
" often reflected with no small pleasure
" upon your own. now, if you will only
" begin with that idea, which is so fami-
" liar to your minds, and carry on your
" thoughts upon the subject, you will
" soon come to form a prodigiously high
" and exalted notion of the wisdom of
" God; and at the same time will perceive
" that

LECT. V. “ that there is the greatest reason in truth
“ and nature for your doing so. thus for
“ example, when you have carried the
“ idea of your own wisdom as far as you
“ can for shame, you will, I doubt not,
“ be ready to acknowledge that God is a
“ great deal wiser than you. I should not
“ only think myself very prophane and arro-
“ gant, but also very foolish, if I did not.
“ because, whatever wisdom I have, or were
“ it ten thousand times more than it is, I
“ must have received it from God, and am
“ intirely indebted to him for it. and he
“ that gave me all the wisdom I have, must
“ needs be himself wiser than I. then,
“ for the same reason, my dear child, God
“ must be wiser than the wisest man upon
“ earth ; because, whoever that man may
“ be, he has, as truly as yourself, received
“ all the wisdom he possesses, from the
“ same God, to whom you are indebted
“ for yours. and were you to add to the
“ wisdom of the wisest amongst men that
“ of another who may be supposed to come
“ the nearest to him in the share he en-
“ joys of this qualitie, still the wisdom
“ of God must for the same reason be
“ greater than the wisdom of these two
“ men

“ men put together. (could we indeed LECT. V.
“ consider these respective qualities as be-
“ ing distinct aggregates, and were not
“ rather led to look upon the wisdom of
“ the one as being virtually comprehended
“ in that of the other.) all of it, that is
“ by either of them possessed being no
“ other than a derivation or communica-
“ tion from him. upon the same princi-
“ ple the wisdom of God must needs sur-
“ pass all the wisdom of all the men that
“ have ever lived in the world, or that
“ ever will live in it, of all that ever have
“ or ever will inhabit any other planet,
“ nay, and of all the angels of heaven,
“ were the wisdom of all this immense
“ number of beings put together, so as to
“ form the accumulated endowment of
“ one mind or conscious being, because
“ all this wisdom has been in realitie de-
“ rived from God. and it cannot be, but
“ that he must himself have more wisdom
“ than what in this kind he has communi-
“ cated to any of his creatures, or to all
“ of them in conjunction. by attend-
“ ing a little to such reflexions as these,
“ you will be led to form a very high and
“ elevated idea of the divine wisdom, and
“ yet

LECT. V. “ yet an idea that is capable of being pro-
 “ digiously increased by other reflexions
 “ upon the same subject. thus, for in-
 “ stance, you told me in the last confe-
 “ rence we held, that God, you thought,
 “ made you with a design that you should
 “ be happy. but wisdom consists in pro-
 “ secuting this or that design, which any
 “ conscious and thinking being has in
 “ view after such a manner as is best adapt-
 “ ed for accomplishing such an end. now,
 “ the more diligently you attend to the
 “ frame of your own mind, the more evi-
 “ dently you will perceive how exactly
 “ the various powers and affections be-
 “ longing to it, are in the nature and
 “ tendencie of them fitted for the promoting
 “ and advancing of your happiness. wis-
 “ dom, or the capacitie for it, reason, is
 “ far from being the only qualitie or en-
 “ dowment belonging to your soul or
 “ thinking part ; of this I doubt not your-
 “ self are very sensible. you have a love
 “ of knowlege, a desire of being ac-
 “ quainted with persons, things and oc-
 “ currences, and of being informed con-
 “ cerning this or that. this is a natural
 Curiositie. “ curiositie belonging to your minds,
 “ which,

“ which, tho’ now it may be exercised LECT. V.
 “ only in comparatively small and trifling }
 “ matters, yet as you advance in years, if
 “ you advance in wisdom and goodness
 “ also, as I hope will be the case, will
 “ put you upon many inquiries of the
 “ highest moment, and will be the means
 “ of affording you a prodigious deal of
 “ satisfaction and delight. and how great
 “ must be the sum of pleasure arising from
 “ such a curiositie or love of knowlege and
 “ desire of improving it, as concomitant
 “ with your eternal existence ! besides you
 “ have a natural inclination to love virtue, Virtue,
 “ as you will easily perceive by consider-
 “ ing only why it is that you love one
 “ person better than another. you will
 “ always find it to be on account of some
 “ virtuous qualities, some good temper and
 “ disposition of mind, of which you sup-
 “ pose such an one to have a larger share
 “ than another, or in whom at least such
 “ qualities are to you more apparent. you
 “ have likewise a natural principle of grati-
 “ tude belonging to you, of which you will
 “ be very sensible if you consider only how
 “ prodigiously you are shocked and have
 “ your indignation excited, and how you

LECT. V. “ are even struck into amazement, when
 “ you hear of any ill returns that have
 “ been made by one man to another, who
 “ has bestowed a great many favors upon
 “ him; and of mens using those very
 “ basely and ill, by whom they themselves
 “ have been treated with the greatest kind-
 Gratitude. “ nefs and good-will. now this is a prin-
 “ ciple of great use in societie, and to you
 “ as a member of it. for you are to recol-
 “ lect that all mankind are endued with the
 “ same principles of nature as yourself; so
 “ that whatsoever you find to be a natural
 “ principle of your own mind, you may
 “ conclude to be in like manner belonging
 “ to every other human being. for God
 “ has *fashioned the hearts of all men alike*;
 “ as you know the scripture expressees it in
 “ the thirty-third Psalm. this principle
 “ of gratitude is likewise a natural foun-
 “ dation for religion, and for the worship
 “ and devout admiration of God, to whom
 “ we are under infinite obligations; who
 “ is our constant and unwearied bene-
 “ factor, and whom therefore, gratitude
 “ alone, according to it’s genuine ten-
 “ dencie and influence, could not but
 “ dispose us to serve and honor, to love
 “ and

“ and obey (a). I suppose likewise, you Lect. V.
 “ will find yourself to be naturally endued Future ex-
 “ with the desire of a future existence, istence.
 “ with a fondness for your own being, and
 “ for the continuation of it in some future
 “ state, and that this even excites in your
 “ breast a strong apprehension and expect-
 “ tation that it really will be continued;
 “ even tho’ after a while you must cease
 “ to be an inhabitant of the world you
 “ live in now. for if you had the least
 “ apprehension of ceasing to be, ask your
 “ own mind whether it would not be con-
 “ ceived of by you as a fate most deplora-
 “ ble and dreadful, and of all things to be
 “ deprecated and abhorred. now this de-
 “ sire and love of immortalitie and expect-
 “ tation of it, is not only very pleasing
 E 2 “ and

(a) Etenim, judices, cum omnibus virtuti-
 bus me affectum esse cupiam, tamen nihil est
 quod malim, quam me et gratum esse et videri.
 hæc est enim una virtus, non solum maxima, sed
 etiam mater virtutum omnium reliquarum. quid
 est pietas, nisi voluntas grata in parentes? qui
 sunt boni cives? qui belli, qui domi de patria
 bene merentes, nisi qui patriæ beneficia me-
 minerunt? qui sancti, qui religionem colentes,
 nisi qui meritam diis immortalibus gratiam
 justis honoribus & memori mente persolvunt?
Cicer. pro Planc.

LECT. V. “ and delightful to you at present, it not
 “ only gives you a very high sense of the
 “ dignitie and excellēce of your nature,
 “ but also tends to inspire you with the
 “ desire of being happy in another world,
 “ and consequently of pleasing God at
 “ present, in order to that end. on all these
 “ accounts then must you not immedi-
 “ ately perceive that both your own and
 “ the common nature of mankind is most
 “ advantageously and suitably formed for
 “ the pursuit and attainment of that hap-
 “ piness, which you suppose to have been
 “ the design and purpose of God in making
 “ you and the rest of your fellow-crea-
 “ tures. and if this be the case, then
 “ have you, my dear child, in the frame
 “ and constitution of your own mind, and
 “ consequently in the general fabric and
 “ constitution of human nature through-
 “ out all the species, a farther proof of
 “ the divine wisdom to be added to the
 “ former one in order to strengthen, en-
 “ large and heighten your notion of this
 “ divine attribute. God designed you for
 “ happiness. he has most admirably fitted
 “ the powers and affections of your nature
 “ for the attainment of it. you cannot
 “ there-

E X E R C I S E S.

77

“ therefore but ascribe wisdom to your LECT. V.
 “ creator. but of this you may be still }
 “ farther and more effectually convinced
 “ by considering in conjunction with what
 “ has been already laid before you upon
 “ this subject, the state and order of the
 “ material world. matter has not in itself Material
 “ any wisdom or thought. it is quite an world.
 “ unmeaning, insensible thing. the sun
 “ itself has no consciousness of it's own
 “ lustre and usefulness ; and is altogether
 “ as incapable of a sentiment or a thought
 “ as is a clod of earth. there is not any
 “ part of your own body that would so
 “ much as have any feeling, so far is it
 “ from having any wisdom, were it not for
 “ the spirit, soul, or mind that animates
 “ it. and therefore it is, that when this
 “ soul or spirit is retired and withdrawn
 “ from it, the body becomes at that very
 “ instant motionless and insensible, even
 “ tho' all the limbs and organs be as yet
 “ remaining in the same form, contexture
 “ and position as before. but, tho' mat-
 “ ter be in itself wholly insensible and
 “ destitute of all thought and wisdom, yet
 “ in the order and arrangement of its parts,
 “ and in the structure and formation of

E 3
“ those

LECTURE V. “ those several bodies which compose and
 “ constitute the external world or visible
 “ scene of nature are the highest possible
 “ marks of wisdom and design. thus for
 “ example, our own bodies in particular
 “ are most wonderfully made and contrived
 “ for usefulness. with what ease and rea-
 “ diness, my dear child, do you move from
 “ one place to another? what a great va-
 “ rietie of objects can you command with
 “ your eyes, without being put to the
 “ least trouble or fatigue in order to your
 “ seeing of them? with what readiness do
 “ you both see and hear, and feel and taste,
 “ and smell and converse with your friends,
 “ all at one and the same time; and all
 “ the while your blood is circulating, the
 “ digestion of your food is going on, and
 “ every part of your body is receiving
 “ nourishment and strength, and you your-
 “ selves growing up apace into men and
 “ women. think you not that there must
 “ have been a great deal of wisdom and
 “ art and counsel in order to these effects?
 “ did you ever hear of or see any in-
 “ strument or machine, that performed so
 “ many different motions and operations
 “ at once, and with so much readiness and
 “ ease?

“ ease? do you think there is any man LECT. V.
 “ upon earth that can form any structure
 “ that for beautie and commodiousness
 “ shall be comparable to an human bodie?
 “ whose contrivance is it then? it is not
 “ yours. it is not that of any human be-
 “ ing. it is not, according to what has
 “ just now been intimated, any art or skill
 “ belonging to inanimate nature itself,
 “ or to the clay that your bodies are made
 “ of. so again; if the sun, that vast and
 “ splendid luminarie, had been in any other
 “ position than what it is with respect to
 “ our earth, either you and all the world
 “ would have been set on fire, or else you
 “ must have been frozen to death. how
 “ comes it then to pass, that for so many
 “ thousand years together, day after day,
 “ it should so continually observe that ex-
 “ act regularitie and perfect order in its
 “ appearance, to which we are indebted
 “ under God for every blessing of our ani-
 “ mal life and being? that it should with
 “ so much constancie and perseverance
 “ nourish the earth, cause the corn and
 “ the grass to grow for the refreshment of
 “ man and beast, beautifie the flowers of
 “ the field and *bless the springing thereof;*
E 4
“ invi-

LECT. V. “ invigorate our own bodies, and supply us
 “ in a regular succession of hours with its
 “ enlightening beams both for our pleasure
 “ and for our accommodation and convenience in carrying on whatever transactions we may be engaged in? how comes
 “ it to pass, that not so much as for one
 “ day, no, not for one hour, it should ever
 “ disappoint our dependance upon it; but
 “ that without the least failure his *going*
 “ *forth should be from the end of the heaven,*
 “ *and his circuit to the ends of it; and that nothing should be hid from the heat thereof?* upon
 “ the earth what a regular production of the
 “ same kind of vegetables and fruits fitted
 “ for the use and benefit of man? all appearing in the same order, in the same
 “ shape, form and season from year to year
 “ continually? all the same species of
 “ brute animals feeding upon, and nourished by these fruits of the earth? the
 “ bodies of these all of them exquisitely
 “ formed, and yet in the greatest variety
 “ of kinds? the air and the sea continually stocked with the same sort of inhabitants, all of them perfect, according
 “ to their respective natures; and exactly
 “ fitted to enjoy themselves in the elements
 “ to

“ to which they are respectively belong- LECT. V.
“ ing? do you think it possible that there }
“ should be such a constant, regular suc-
“ cession and order in these things, were
“ there not some wise contrivance by
“ which it is effected, and to which it is
“ owing? if you see the same sort of busi-
“ ness or affairs carried on in any familie,
“ in that for instance of which any of you
“ may be a branch, or in any other; one
“ thing regularly done after another, one
“ person having this employment, and an-
“ other that, regularly belonging to him,
“ and going about it from day to day with-
“ out variation, you are very sure that all
“ this does not happen by chance, but that
“ there is some design, some meaning and
“ intention in it; and some wise man or
“ woman, one or more, that conduct these
“ affairs, and order them to be as they are.
“ but is there not a vast deal more of or-
“ der and regularitie in the operations of
“ nature than in any merely human schemes
“ or contrivances? the order of the best
“ regulated familie is no better than con-
“ fusion, when compared with the order of
“ the world itself. surely then there must
“ be somewise, intelligent being, that super-

LECT. V. “ intends and guides the affairs of it. or,
 “ let me ask you, in order to a somewhat
 “ different illustration of this matter, whe-
 “ ther you do not think it a piece of very
 “ exquisite skill, for any one to draw with
 “ a lively, piercing likeness the picture of
 “ a human bodie, or of any brute animal?
 “ or to exhibit in painting a representation
 “ of the firmament or of the sea, or of any
 “ particular scene in nature? surely you
 “ esteem it so. must it not then, I would
 “ ask you, implie far greater skill to have
 “ brought into being the very things them-
 “ selves? and if you admire the art of a
 Pictures. “ man who can draw a few pictures, how
 “ great must be the wisdom of that being,
 “ who contrived the whole plan of the uni-
 “ verse! for all the wisdom that is now
 “ apparent in the beautie and order of pro-
 “ vidence must needs originally and essen-
 “ tially have resided in the mind that go-
 “ verns all. what an amazing idea then
 “ must it give you of the divine wisdom,
 “ that it exceeds the wisdom of all rational
 “ natures put together, with all that is
 “ apparent in the exquisite symmetrie and
 “ contrivance of the corporeal system;
 “ for that mind which alone produced
 “ these,

“ these, must needs be superior in wisdom LECT. V.
 “ to all that these discover or possess. and
 “ from such a view of the wisdom of
 “ deitie, you cannot but collect, that it is
 “ so perfect, as that there must be an utter
 “ impossibilitie of it's being baffled, or
 “ in any of it's measures defeated by a
 “ superior skill. since there is no wisdom
 “ by any other being throughout universal
 “ nature possessed of which he is not him-
 “ self the giver. it is farther evident
 “ from this view of it, that as the mea-
 “ sures of divine wisdom cannot be frus-
 “ trated or defeated by any opposing mea-
 “ sures, it must needs likewise be in itself
 “ sufficient for directing the events of the
 “ whole universe in a manner completely
 “ answerable to the final ends and purposes
 “ of a divine government in nature ; the
 “ whole universe being no other than the
 “ product and contrivance of that wisdom
 “ itself, which therefore it must needs be
 “ able with an infallible certaintie through-
 “ out all the parts of it to manage and
 “ direct. so that whatever be the designs
 “ and purposes of divine and heavenly
 “ love, nothing can possibly hinder the
 “ accomplishment of them by that wisdom

LECT. V. "which is also divine." such then are
 { the evident and undeniable proofs of a
 perfect, absolute and unerring wisdom
 essentially belonging to the supreme, eter-
 nal mind. and after what has now been
 offered upon this topic, we need not per-
 haps be very particular in insisting upon
 that other attribute of power, as alike be-
 longing to the sovereign nature. the man-
 ner of proving it, and even the proofs or
 evidences themselves being in effect the
 very same with the proofs that have been
 adduced of the divine wisdom, and the man-
 ner in which we have endeavored to illustrate
 them. that which is wisdom in the con-
 trivance being just so much power in the
 execution. and it being by the exertion of
 power only that the proofs of wisdom be-
 come apparent, just so many as we have
 of the divine wisdom, so many of necessitie
 must there be occuring likewise of the di-
 vine power. so again, according to the
 purport and tenor of the preceding argu-
 ment, the power of God must needs be
 greater than all human power, the power
 of the inhabitants of all the planets, the
 power of all the angels and arch-angels,
 greater, I say, than the power of all these

Power.

collected, if it were possible, so as to constitute in a proportionable amount, the force or power of some one single and individual being; because all this power is originally and alone derived from him. all which therefore in this united view of it, the divine power must needs exceed. it is therefore a power not to be controlled by any. whatever may be the malice of infernal agents, and how great soever may be their power, when compared with some other created beings, yet have they no more power against God than a worm of the earth. "he ruleth for ever by his might, and all nations," the inhabitants of every world, "are but as the small dust of the balance before him."

LECTURE VI.

LECT. VI.

WE have now gone through the illustration of those which are called the natural attributes of the deitie, by way of distinction from such as are moral. some account of which distinction has likewise been laid before you. the sources of proof and argument upon these several topics have been pointed out ; and from what has been delivered in relation to them, many very interesting particulars may be collected in reference to the attributes and character, the qualities and properties of his providence ; another topic, which we at first mentioned as designed to be insisted upon in this our evening exercise. rather indeed, the proof upon these several subjects is one and the same. thus for instance, it has been proved that God is a powerful and almighty being. and from hence, or rather from the proof that has been given of it, we cannot but conclude that his providence must be a powerful providence ; power, as an attribute of his nature, being proved from the real appearances of actual power

power in the productions of the visible LECT. VI.
 creation, and in the regular course and }
 stated order of the world. so again we
 have shewn that the power of God must
 needs be in the nature of it absolutely un-
 controlable and irresistible. from hence it
 follows that this must needs be a qualitie^{its}
 belonging to all the actual exertions of it.
 a being that is in his nature above all con-
 trole, must needs be so in his operations
 too. men are oftentimes forced to exert
 even their own power in doing things,
 which they had rather not do, being con-
 trolled by the superior power of others in
 this or that particular project or pursuit.
 in these cases, which very often happen,
 they do, as we express the matter, as well
 as they can ; but God always does what he ^{character}
 will. and from what we have been saying
 likewise concerning his wisdom, as being
 an essential attribute of his nature, it must
 needs appear that in all the actual measures
 of his providence he procedes in the man-
 ner that is most exactly and completely
 adapted for the accomplishment of those
 designs and purposes, which he originally
 had in view, and which depend upon those
 moral attributes which yet remain to be
 con-

LECT. VI. considered. but whatever may be these
 ends, it appears from what has been already
 said, that they cannot but be wisely pur-
 sued ; for God is a wise being, absolutely
 and infinitely wise. now a wise being,
 “ you my children will easily perceive,”
 cannot deliberately act an absurd or a fool-
 ish part. and with respect to the sovereign
 mind, it is absolutely impossible that he
 should be induced by the force of tempta-
 tion, as men often are, to act contrary to
 the dictates of his own wisdom and discern-
 ment. for temptations arise intirely from
 our own particular situation as creatures ;
 and therefore cannot be supposed to have
 any existence at all with respect to the su-
 preme and infinite creator. if God there-
 fore be a wise being, all his productions,
 works, operations and measures must needs
 have the character of wisdom impressed
 upon them. besides, in the very proof
 which has been given of his wisdom, as an
 attribute essentially belonging to his nature,
 we have in the same manner as was ob-
 served in relation to his power, a proof
 likewise of the wisdom of his providence,
 this proof being indeed no other than the
 signature, the expression, the most lively
 striking


striking appearance of wisdom in the conduct of that very providence itself. men are sometimes possessed of a wisdom which thro' inactivitie and indolence they suffer to be in a great measure concealed from the view of others. but the wisdom of God is an actually exerted wisdom. a wisdom that is perpetually manifesting and displaying itself in the wonders of his providence, and in the admirable beautie, symmetrie and order of all his works, to his intelligent and rational creatures. from the immutabilitie likewise of the divine being, another of those we call the natural attributes of the deitie, it necessarily follows that all the properties as well as the designs of his providence must be ever uniform and the same. as no change can possibly be made in the power or in the wisdom of God, which are essentially belonging to his nature, his providence it directly follows must always be a wise and a powerful providence. and as the same marks of power and wisdom are apparent in every part of nature, from hence we collect another propertie or character of the divine providence; namely, that it is universal. since these appearances of power and wisdom can

LECT. VI. can only be owing to the actual, present exertion by deitie of his inherent, essential power and wisdom, which is the very thing we mean by a providence ; that which the term is intended to signifie and denote. but now if God be thus irresistibly powerful and infinitely wise ; if there be no being in the universe that can either controule his actions or defeat his purposes ; if this power and wisdom are equally capable of being exerted in every part of the immense system of nature and over all rational agents whatsoever ; and if such power and wisdom will remain essentially belonging to the deitie throughout all the endless ages of eternitie, what can be of more importance or consequence to man than the consideration of his moral attributes, which alone must determine and direct the operations of this power and wisdom ? “ could you, my “ child, think of any thing that would “ appear more dreadful, than that there “ should be an almightie and all-wise being that presided over the world, who “ yet was wholly destitute of goodness ; “ that had no love, no compassion, no “ forgiveness ? would it not be inexpres- “ sibly terrible to you, to think that you “ yourself,

Transition

“ yourself, that all your friends, your LECT. VI.
“ neighbors, your acquaintance, your }
“ kindred, the whole world itself and
“ other worlds, worlds beyond worlds in to the moral
“ infinite varietie, as it has been exprest, attributes.
“ were all in the hands and absolutely at
“ the disposal of a being thus destitute of
“ mercie and of love? would not your blood
“ be almost chilled in your veins, should you
“ hear of a father, who is continually ex-
“ ercising the utmost crueltie and inhum-
“ nitie towards his own children, exacting
“ from them the most rigorous services,
“ and denying them the necessarie suste-
“ nance of nature, needlessly exposing
“ them to all manner of danger, and suf-
“ fering them to undergoe all manner of
“ losses, injuries and hardships, without
“ the least concern or thought of prevent-
“ ing it? or when you hear of a tyrant,
“ that employs all his power and abilities
“ in nothing else but in acts of oppression,
“ mischief and crueltie, do you not abhor
“ him? and do you not shudder at the
“ thought that any such man or being
“ should be existing? but would it not,
“ think you, be infinitely more dreadful
“ and lamentable, were this the character
“ of

LECT. VI. “ of the sovereign mind ? what could you
 “ then hope for at his hands ? or what, on
 “ the contrary, might you not justly dread
 “ from such an ungracious being, armed
 “ with omnipotence ? when some monster
 “ of a tyrant rages in the world, you know
 “ he is liable to death ; he may very soon
 “ be cut off, or at most his reign cannot
 “ be very long, and after a while the
 “ world is for ever freed from so dreadful
 “ and enormous a plague. but if God
 “ were an implacable or a cruel being, he
 “ would remain so to all eternitie, and
 “ throughout every period of duration. by
 “ all your entreaties and prayers you could
 “ not in any one instance prevail upon him
 “ to be otherwise.” such would be the
 dreadful state and condition of the world,
 if the God who governs and presides over
 it were of an evil and malignant nature.
 “ and I have endeavored, my dear children,
 “ to heighten your apprehension upon the
 “ supposition of such a government in the
 “ universe, not for the sake of terrifying
 “ you, but only with a view of rendering
 “ the contrarie persuation so much the
 “ more delightful and welcome to your
 “ hearts. when you hear of any child
 “ that

“ that has a cruel and hard-hearted father, LECT. VI.
“ such an one as we have just now been 
“ speaking of, does not this make you the
“ more thankful that yours is of a different
“ temper, gentle, mild and gracious?
“ when you hear of subjects, of whole
“ realms and nations, that are oppressed
“ by the arbitrarie and tyrannic prince,
“ does not this make you so much the
“ more thankful for the freedom and hap-
“ piness enjoyed among ourselves? in like
“ manner as you could not but have the
“ most terrible apprehensions concerning
“ the fate of the world, of an universe, that
“ was governed by an almighty and all-
“ wise, but yet malignant being; this is
“ a consideration, that should heighten in
“ proportion the joy, the praise, the grati-
“ tude of your hearts, when you consider
“ and have it proved to you that the case
“ is indeed directly the reverse; and that
“ the great governor of the world, your
“ God and my God, and the God of
“ all mankind, and of all the angels and
“ arch-angels of heaven, is a being as
“ merciful as he is wise, as kind as he is
“ mightie. for when you know that he is
“ thus good, you are sure, according to
“ what

LECT. VI. “ what has already been laid before you,
“ that he will be eternally so, and can
“ never in any instance whatsoever or in the
“ least degree deviate from this character.
“ you will likewise be satisfied from what
“ has been said concerning his power and
“ wisdom, that as such a being must neces-
“ sarily in all the measures of his provi-
“ dence and government have some gra-
“ cious intention in view, so he will
“ always be able to put it in execution.
“ so that when once you come to be firmly
“ persuaded and satisfied of this divine
“ and sovereign benevolence, you will
“ have every thing to hope for, nothing
“ to fear, and the strongest ground for a
“ constant cheerfulness and content.” for
these reasons how much should it be the
matter of delight to us all, that the proofs
of the divine goodness and benignitie are
so abundantly strong and convincing, as
upon a due consideration of them cannot
but be apparent. indeed they are altoge-
ther as clear and as numerous, as those
which we have of the divine power and
wisdom. in the same appearances or phæ-
nomena of nature all these attributes are
equally evident ; goodness in the end,
wisdom

wisdom in the means, and power in the execution. indeed, with respect to wisdom, it is even absolutely impossible that we should be able to discover any marks or traces of it in the works of God, did we not plainly perceive some end to be aimed at in those works, because wisdom is relative to an end, and is to be judged of by it. it may be equally apparent in the prosecution of very different ends. thus a torturing engine may be made with equal wisdom and contrivance, and as much skill and dexteritie may be displayed in the formation of it, as in any piece of mechanism designed to answer the most benevolent and useful purposes. but it is evident that some end or another, either a kind or a mischievous one, or else a merely private and personal aim, must needs discover itself to our view, ere we can perceive the wisdom of this or that particular agent. and equal wisdom may appear in the prosecution, not only of different, but of directly contrary ends. thus, if the supreme being had been as malevolent, as he is kind and gracious, we should have had equal proofs of his wisdom with what we have at present. but then it would have appeared, not
in

LECT. VI. in the production of happiness, but of
 { miserie; and the whole universe would

Inquisition, have been a kind of inquisition filled with the engines, instruments and signs of miserie; and every part of it accurately and with all possible skill and dexteritie contrived for mischief. but now on the contrarie, wherever we discover wisdom in the works of God, it is by their apparent tendencie to produce good, and to answer some kind and friendly end; to accommodate and make his creatures happy. the more his works are known, the more this appears to be the ultimate design and view of them. not one single instance in nature is there that comes within the compass of human observation, which does not thus display and manifest the goodness of its author. a few specimens more particularly and distinctly illustrated, will tend to clear and ascertain this truth. and indeed we cannot upon considering such specimens, and recollecting that the very same exactness, beautie, kind and friendly design is in every part of nature's works observable, but entertain the highest idea of that goodness. and in such specimens we shall likewise have a farther illustration of some
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
preceding topics ; the power, for instance, LECT. VI. and the wisdom of God. for as these attributes are essentially united in the divine nature with goodness, so the evidence of them is inseparable from the proof of it. in so close and compact a manner are these interesting truths discovered to us “ by the “ things that are seen ; ” and which so clearly demonstrate an “ eternal power and “ godhead.” suppose then we take for our example the human eye, that so eminently useful part of our own bodily frame. in the external part of it what admirable and kind contrivance is apparent ? such as these are things too generally overlooked, because they are common ; but there is not the least of wisdom in them on this account ; and yet vastly more of goodness, which therefore should recommend such reflexions to our attention. by the prominence of the nose the eye is very happily guarded from any external danger or injurie, which might otherways very often happen by means of a blow or a fall. the same end is likewise answered by that arch, which is erected over it. and by this arch and those coverings of it which form the brows, another very important end is served. by this means

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LECT. VI. the rays of light are prevented from darting so strongly and directly upon the eye, as instead of enabling us to see the better, would soon make us stark blind. of this any one may be convinced only by lifting up his head aloft and looking stedfastly at the sun. we soon find the inconvenience. and why, but because by such a posture this use of the arch of the eye is wholly prevented and set aside. and had it not been for this, to so dreadful an inconvenience we should have been continually subject, till after a while we should have been reduced to absolute blindness. by this arch likewise and its covering, as well as by the eye-lids, the sweat of the head and forehead are prevented from falling into the eye, which might otherways have proved extremely detrimental to it. the eye-lashes answer a very important purpose with respect to the safety and securitie of the eye; as by means of them the little flying particles of rubbish are prevented from falling into it. the inner part of the eye consists of various coats and humors, all regularly placed one under another; and had these been placed in any other order than that in which they really lie, the ends of vision must

must have been wholly frustrated. must LECT. VI.
 there not then be a perpetual goodness, }
 power and wisdom exerted in the regular
 continuation of this exact order through-
 out the whole species? even the very pain
 we feel upon the falling into the eye of
 some loose and wandering particle which
 arises from the exquisite sensibilitie natu-
 rally belonging to one of the coats of it,
 answers a most admirably useful and bene-
 volent purpose; for by this means the tears
 are drawn out, and the thing offending
 washed away, which, were it long to re-
 main, would prove not only extremely
 painful, but likewise a great obstruction to
 the sight, if not in time totally destroy it.
 among the several humors of the eye there
 is one, which is called the aqueous; of
 which from its nature and situation the
 eye may by accident happen to be deprived.
 but observe the benignitie of nature; there
 is a provision in any such case for a supplie
 of it. Mr. Ray, in his Treatise upon the
 wisdom of God in the creation, tells us of
 an experiment to this purpose, that was
 made upon the eye of a dog on the anatomi-
 cal theatre at Leyden. “upon a wound
 that had been given to his eye, the aque-
 ous

LECT. VI.  ous humor flowed so plentifully from it, that its membranes and coats appeared quite lank, flaccid and dry; and yet in six hours space the eye was again filled with the same aqueous humor; and that without the application of any medicines." with respect to that hollow of the eye, through which the rays pass to the retina, where the objects we see are painted, one might imagine it to be a matter of comparatively small importance, whether it were a little wider or a little narrower. yet it appears in fact and from observations made, that upon the slightest alteration in this respect, either by the contraction or dilatation of it, the greatest inconvenience would ensue. "how most exact then in the words of the poet is nature's frame! how wise the eternal mind!" how kind and friendly the formation of the eye in this respect, that the most useful dimension of this part should be so exactly and accurately preserved throughout the whole species! it is likewise highly worthy of remark, that in the eyes of

Brutes. brute animals there is a peculiar provision made for the usefulness, ease, safety and defence of this organ, according to the

par-

particular manner in which they are def- LECT. VI.
tined to live, and their being to be sup-
ported. thus we are told that in a frog,
whose habitation is chiefly in watry places
abounding with sedges and other plants,
that have sharp points or edges, among
which this animal is to be continually hop-
ping about, there is a particular cartilage
or membrane, with which it can at plea-
sure cover over the eye, without obstruct-
ing the sight of it; and thus defend itself
from injury, this membrane being at once
strong and transparent; and at pleasure too
withdrawn, when there is no particular use
or occasion for it. the same thing is ob-
servable in several sort of birds, who are
destined to fly among plants and bushes,
lest the prickles, twigs, leaves, or other
parts, should wound or any way offend the
eye. it is likewise very remarkable in
horses and other animals, that are to feed
for the most part on herbs and the grafs of
the field, and that they may the better choose
their food, obliged to be long looking down-
ward, that they are provided with what
anatomists call the seventh muscle; a muscle
not belonging to the eye of man, because
there was no occasion for it; but with

LECT. VI. great wisdom and goodness made to be a
 { part in the formation of the eye of these
 animals, that by means of it that wearisomeness and fatigue of the eye, which must otherways have necessarily ensued from this downward posture, might be prevented.
 “ you will not, I hope, my little children,
 “ think that these things are to be over-
 “ looked or disregarded, because they are
 “ illustrations drawn from the inferior part
 “ of the creation, the mere animal tribe ;
 “ since God is the former of these animals
 “ as well as of man. and many excellent
 “ uses are to be drawn from that goodness
 “ and wisdom of the divine being, which
 “ are so apparent in the production, struc-
 “ ture and preservation of these inferior
 “ creatures. thus for instance, if God
 “ *takes care of oxen*, of sheep, nay, of frogs,
 “ as is so apparent in the continued agencie
 “ of his providence, from thence, my dear
 “ child, you may infer, that you ought
 “ not to use these brute creatures with
 “ cruelty. for if God be continually pro-
 “ viding for their ease and safety, in so
 “ doing you must needs act in contrariety
 “ to him, which cannot surely be pleasing
 “ in his sight, nor at all honorable to your-
 “ self.

“ self. and from hence you may infer, LECT. VI.
 “ that if you cannot without displeasing
 “ him and acting in contradiction to the
 “ views of his providence, be barbarous
 “ and cruel in your treatment of this
 “ brutal tribe, you must to be sure offend
 “ him still more highly by using ill and
 “ cruelly any of your brethren of man-
 “ kind. and then farther in the third
 “ place, if the kind providence of God
 “ is continually exercised in the preser-
 “ vation of these animals, you may cer-
 “ tainly depend upon it that he will take
 “ care of you, and provide in the best
 “ manner for all your interests and con-
 “ cerns. I hope you remember that this
 “ is an argument made use of by your
 “ beloved saviour and redeemer himself.
 “ *if God take care of oxen, yea, and of the*
 “ *grass of the field, which to day is, and to-*
 “ *morrow is cast into the oven, how much*
 “ *more will he clothe you, o ye of little faith?*”

but to return to the argument we were
 upon, and to use the words of an ex-
 cellent writer in relation to it; “ it must
 needs be incredible to any one that such
 a number of particular circumstances as
 are requisite in so great a matter as that

LECT. VI. of sight, should have concured and met in so small a compass as the space that contains the eye, by chance or by necessary causes, without the least view or intention of a creating mind." but we have seen that there are not only the certain marks of design and intention in it, but equally strong and certain marks likewise of a kind and benevolent intention. in this single instance then, if we consider the constant preservation of the same form and construction throughout the whole human species and all the animal tribes, and that for a whole life; and that thus it has been for thousands of years past, if we reflect upon the innumerable benefits and advantages, pleasures and delights which we enjoy in consequence of this organ of vision or sense of seeing, what a prodigiously clear and satisfying proof have we of the divine benigntie and goodness! but how much higher must this proof arise, if we consider that the same exquisite and friendly contrivance would appear upon an examination of all the other senses and organs; in those of hearing, taste, speaking and the like, and in every part of nature whatsoever! upon such a survey it must

must appear altogether as absurd to deny LECT. VI.
 the goodness of God as to deny his being. }
 but as this is an attribute so essential to our
 happiness, as it is the foundation of all
 religion, and the only genuine ground of Devotion.
 devotion, without the conviction of which
 possessing our minds, we could only dread
 omnipotence and be astonished at infinite
 wisdom, I propose to pursue my reflexions
 upon it, and to lay before you some dif-
 ferent views of the argument upon which
 we found our belief of it as belonging to
 the sovereign mind.

LECTURE VII.

WE are now treating upon the good-LECT. VII.
 ness of God. and it is observed }
 in the scriptures that *the earth is full of it.*
 “ you remember I hope, my good children,
 “ the passage I refer to. yes, sir, it is in
 “ the thirty-third Psalm: *the Lord loveth*
 “ *righteousness and judgement; the earth is*
 “ *full of the goodness of the Lord.* and do
 “ you not think that by that expression

LECT. VII. “ the psalmist might mean, that in the
 “ constant, regular and plentiful produc-
 “ tions of the *earth* God hath given to
 “ mankind a most visible display and clear
 “ demonstration of his goodness? or do
 “ you imagine his meaning in this expres-
 “ sion to have been, that every thing which
 “ comes within the notice of the inhabi-
 “ tants of the earth, the whole structure
 “ and formation of the world, and all the
 “ stated and orderly appearances of it, are
 “ so many displays of that goodness? this
 “ latter is the more extensive idea, and
 “ will naturally include the other. I sup-
 “ pose then it is that which you would pre-
 “ fer. this however, I may venture to
 “ assure you of, that in that one particu-
 “ lar comprehended under this general
 “ expression of the psalmist, which I have
 “ already hinted at, according to this more
 “ extensive interpretation of it, the pro-
 “ duction I mean of the fruits of the earth,
 “ and the provision that is made for the
 “ continual supplie and regular succession
 “ of them, is contained a very strong deci-
 “ sive illustration of the argument which
 “ we are now upon; the proof I mean of
 “ the divine goodness. you have been
 “ already

“ already told how curiously and wonder-LECT. VII.
 “ fully the body of man, as well as that of
 “ all the animals belonging to this earthly
 “ or terraqueous globe has been formed.
 “ a terraqueous globe this earth is some-
 “ times called; because it consists of sea
 “ and waters as well as land. and this so
 “ admirable structure of our bodies we
 “ have insisted upon as a most demonstra-
 “ tive argument not only of design, but
 “ of kind and gracious design, that is
 “ to a creating and fovereign deitie to be
 “ ascribed. but pray, my good children,
 “ what would you have thought, supposing
 “ man to have been made just in the same
 “ manner he now is, endued with all the
 “ same organs, limbs, senses, and animal
 “ appetites, which he now possesses; and
 “ that the structure of the mere animals,
 “ the birds, the beasts and insects, had
 “ been just what it is at present; but yet
 “ that no provision had been made in the
 “ system of nature for the support and Friendly
 “ sustenance in these several classes of this adaptations
 “ animal frame? indeed, upon that suppo- in nature,
 “ sition, my idea of the divine goodness
 “ would be very much obscured. because
 “ I find upon my own perpetual experi-
 “ ence,

LECT. VII. " ence, that notwithstanding all the won-
 illustration " derful formation of my body, it stands
 of, " in need of daily support and refreshment,
 " and that the want of these would soon
 " have subjected me to a great deal of
 " pain and miserie, and at length have
 " terminated in the destruction and disso-
 " lution of that animal constitution that is
 " belonging to me. you seem then, my
 " dear child, to apprehend, unless I mis-
 " take your meaning, that man might
 " have been formed just as he is, with all
 " these wonderful contrivances and marks
 " of skill in his bodily frame and contex-
 " ture, and yet that in this very frame and
 " structure of him there might have been
 " no proof at all of the goodness of his
 " creator, but rather of some contrarie
 " disposition in that being. is it possible
 " that the case could have been so? if you
 " please, sir, I will venture to express my
 " thoughts more fully upon that head; and
 " then refer them wholly to your judge-
 " ment, hoping, or rather indeed not
 " doubting, but that you will be so kind as
 " to correct my error, if you find me to
 " have fallen into any. well, you will
 " procede then upon that condition. I
 " will.

“ will. I was much delighted with the LECT. VII.
“ account you gave me, upon the last op-
“ portunitie I had of conversing with you
“ upon this head, of the curious structure
“ and fabric of the eye. but might not
“ mine eye have been made just as it is, and
“ yet the quantitie of light have been far
“ too great to have answered the ends of
“ sight? nay, might it not have been so
“ excessive as to have put me to the se-
“ verest torture in consequence of that
“ very construction of mine eye, which
“ you were then insisting upon; and by
“ this means I should not only have been
“ destitute of all the pleasures of seeing,
“ but likewise have lived in excessive tor-
“ ment and miserie. or might not the
“ objects with which I had been surround-
“ ed, and which by the light I had dis-
“ covered, have been odious and hateful to
“ my sight, troublesome and afflictive to
“ the eye, and a continued source of terri-
“ fying and frightful ideas, and of uneasie
“ and painful sensations? indeed, my
“ child, I must own that there seems to be
“ no direct and absolute impossibilitie in
“ these suppositions. and you think that,
“ had this been really the case, it would
“ have

LECT. VII. “ have appeared that your eye, instead of
“ being formed with any kind or benevo-
“ lent design, had been rather made and
“ contrived purely for the sake of render-
“ ing you liable to all this torture. indeed,
“ sir, I see not how I could have made any
“ other conclusion. you told me likewise
“ that my ear was very admirably formed
“ for hearing. but what, if all the sounds
“ that were presented to it, instead of be-
“ ing what they now are, had been conti-
“ nually terrifying and alarming, like so
“ many bursting claps of thunder, and
“ that by this means I had been almost
“ distracted and rendered incapable either
“ of attending to any of the concerns, or
“ enjoying any of the blessings of life?
“ indeed, child, I am ready to own with
“ you, that had this been the case, you
“ had better have been without this curi-
“ ous organ of hearing. and that it is
“ not, is only to be ascribed to the pure
“ and absolute benevolence of that sove-
“ reign mind which created all things.
“ in like manner, dear sir, as things are at
“ present, I am so far from being sorry
“ that my animal frame stands in need of
“ continual sustenance and refreshment,
“ that

“ that I find a great deal of present, and LECT. V^{II}.
“ I hope innocent, satisfaction, in par- {
“ taking of the *food* that is *convenient* for
“ *me*, besides the many lasting blessings
“ that accrue from it. and I am often
“ very thankful to God, that there is such
“ provision made in the structure of my
“ body for the taking in and digestion of
“ my food, and for promoting the nou-
“ rishment of my body by it, that the
“ necessary support of my nature, instead
“ of being any burden, is on the contrary
“ itself one of the gratifications belonging
“ to my animal frame. I often think too
“ that there is something very entertaining
“ in that vast varietie of methods by which
“ my fellow-creatures all around me are
“ continually employed in providing for
“ themselves and their families these neces-
“ sary refreshments of their being, and in
“ the success, with which for the most part
“ these labors are attended. but alas, how
“ miserable would have been the case, if
“ notwithstanding the wise formation of
“ those particular parts and organs that
“ minister to the uses and ends of nourish-
“ ment, there had been no provision made
“ in the scene of nature for a continual
“ and

LECT. VII. “ and plentiful supply of that nourish-
 “ ment ! what a dreadful thing must it
 “ have been to be able to eat, to be want-
 “ ing to eat, and yet to have no food pro-
 “ vided for us ; to have had it wholly and
 “ absolutely out of our power to procure
 “ any ; that all mankind should have been
 “ in this perishing condition, by some
 “ means or another continually starting up
 “ into the world with all these appetites
 “ about them, only to pine for a while in
 “ extremest miserie, and then to expire.
 “ this surely would have shewn cruelty
 “ and not goodness in the being that made
 “ them, if any such there were. that in-
 “ deed must be allowed. but then if the
 “ direct contrarie to all this appears to be
 “ the real state of things ; if the construc-
 “ tion and order of the world around us is
 “ so admirably adapted to the formation of
 “ our own bodies, as to be a continual sup-
 “ plie to them of nourishment, refresh-
 “ ment, gratification and pleasure, then I
 “ suppose you will readily allow, my child,
 “ that the proof of goodness in deitie is
 “ so far complete, and the argument in
 “ support of it prodigiously heightened and
 “ made to appear in a vastly stronger point
 “ of

“ of view.” now this is indeed exactly LECT. VI.
the case. as the eye is so admirably formed
for seeing, so the light, with which we are
continually furrounded, and which is per-
petually presented to it, is exactly such for
degree and quantity and continuance, as to
be prodigiously refreshing and comfortable
to the sight, instead of being in the least
degree painful or disagreeable. and yet how
easily might it have happened otherwise,
had there not been some highly intelligent
and kindly designing mind, who first placed
the earth and the heavenly bodies in such
an exact situation one towards another, and
continually preserves that position that is
best adapted for our comfort, ease and plea-
sure in this particular? how small a devi-
ation from this order of nature would in-
volve us in the most confounding perplexitie
and horror? and whence is it, think you,
that such a deviation should never happen?
how can we account for it but by a divine
and continually presiding providence? per-
petual light, even tho’ it were in no greater
a degree than that which we have at mid-
day, would perhaps be as great an inconve-
nience as even total darkness itself, to which
after a while it would probably reduce us
by

LECT. VII. by its too powerful and incessant operation upon the visual organ. darkness therefore is a relief to the eye, as light is the comfort and joy of it. it would likewise have been an extreme detriment and prejudice to vision, and must in a great measure have defeated the design of it, if not wholly destroyed it, had night been succeeded in an instant by the fullest blaze of day. and it is a most admirably kind contrivance in the system of the world, that light both comes and goes gradually, and not instantaneously. and the same exactness of kind and benevolent intention is equally observable in that degree of heat which we receive from the sun, and which invigorates the whole animal and vegetable system. Mr. Keil tells us that the great comet which appeared in the year 1680, had approached so near to the sun, as to be made by the heat of it three thousand times hotter than red-hot iron. how small a degree of such an acquired heat, additional to what the earth stately partakes of in consequence of its exact position in the planetary system, would be enough to throw the whole of our orb into the most dreadful disorder and confusion ! what a benigntie and goodness must

must then be apparent in that original con-LECT.VII.trivance and perpetual order, by virtue of which we are so far from being subject to any inconvenience of this kind, that we constantly enjoy such a degree of heat from the sun, as invigorates every part of nature, and brings its various-productions year after year to their exactly wished-for maturitie and perfection! but still notwithstanding this exact position of the earth, how dreadful would be our condition, were it not for the air or atmosphere, thro' the medium of which the rays of light are transmitted, and which is formed of the exactest consistencie for that purpose? but the air likewise, as it is of absolute necessitie for the transition of light, and answers the most kind and friendly intention of nature, or rather I should say, and would be understood to mean, of the great author of nature in this respect, being in itself absolutely necessary for the support of animal life, what a perpetual goodness is apparent in it's being so exactly adapted to the purposes of respiration? for by experiments made in the air-pump it has appeared, that were the air we breathe, only in a small degree more compressed or thicker than it is,

LECT. VII. is, or on the other hand, in a small degree
 { only more rarified or thinner in it's consistencie, it would be so far from contributing to the support of animal life, that it would indeed destroy it. but yet, notwithstanding this admirable position of the earth with respect to the sun, and this exact aptitude in the densitie of the air for the transmission of it's light and the purposes of respiration, all would be in vain, and man in this respect a miserable creature, or else very soon cease to be an inhabitant of this earthly globe, were there not some constant provision made in nature for keeping this latter in motion, in order to prevent it's putrefaction. if this were not done, as an ingenious writer expresses it, " instead of refreshing and animating, it " would suffocate and poison all the world." to this admirably serve the perpetual gales and frequent storms of wind. we value
 Ventilators. much and justly, the late invention of ventilators, and are very thankful to those who have favored the world with this ingenious and most useful invention for clearing ships and other crouded structures of the foul and noxious air that has been contracted, and introducing that which is fresh and

and wholesome. this however is only a LECT. VII.
very faint and shadowy imitation of nature. }
a mere trifling and despicable benefit, great
as it is in itself, when compared with the
grand provision in this respect made by the
sovereign intelligence ; by means of which
the whole system of air is at once with the
greatest facilitie, and without the least trou-
ble to the inhabitants of the world continu-
ally cleansed and purified. and yet how apt
are we to employ our thoughts and conver-
sation in the admiration of these human
inventions, the imperfect copies only of
nature, while we overlook the benevolent
and wise intention of the supreme opificer,
who with such exuberant goodness has
formed, contrived and adjusted every thing
for the benefit and good of man ? “ and
“ does it not, my children, give you a
“ very high and exalted idea of the divine
“ goodness, to think of the amazing, in-
“ expressible number of mankind, and of
“ the inferior creatures, that have ever
“ since the creation been subsisting in con-
“ sequence of these happily established
“ laws of nature continually upheld by the
“ never-ceasing exertion of the great cre-
“ ator ? ” “ the earth, as we have seen,” says
the

LECT. VII. the Psalmist, "is full of the goodness of
 { "the Lord." and if we do but consider the
 magnitude of this earth thus replete with
 goodness, what a large, extensive idea must
 we needs form of that goodness itself? the
 Globe. bulk or solid contents of our globe is no
 less than two hundred and sixty thou-
 sand millions of miles ; and all this pro-
 digiously wide extensive scene quite *filled*
 with "goodness;" an innumerable varietie
 of birds, beasts, insects, reptiles, fishes, in
 every class of which, and in every indivi-
 dual of these classes the most exquisite
 workmanship and contrivance apparent for
 the accommodation of the animal accord-
 ing to his particular habitation and mode
 of living. add to all this the rich and
 plentiful productions of the earth in its
 minerals, vegetables and fruits, in the
 formation and growth of all which there
 are the most evident marks of a kind and
 benevolent intention. every thing is fitted
 for bringing them to their proper degree of
 perfection, and in all these productions
 there is nothing but what has it's admira-
 ble uses. this or that upon an hasty view
 may seem trifling or it may be noxious to
 us ; but yet upon a nearer examination is
 found


found to be useful. thus we are told that LECT. VI.
 the common thistle, which grows by the {
 highway, is even more useful when re-
 duced to ashes, than any other thistle what-
 soever in the making of glass, from whence
 we derive such a number of conveniencies.
 “ does a nettle sting,” says one, “ it is to
 “ secure so good a medicine from the rapes
 “ of children and cattle. does the bramble
 “ cumber a garden, it makes the better
 “ hedge, or if it chance to prick the owner,
 “ it will tear the thief. if hemlock be poison
 “ to man, it is physic to some animals,
 “ and food to another.” nay, even to man
 himself it sometimes proves extremely bene-
 ficial by a proper mode of preparation, and
 being taken in a certain quantitie only.
 even in the very color of the grass of the Colors.
 earth, of the leaves of the trees, and the
 vegetables of the ground, we have an ad-
 mirable and very convincing proof of the
 goodness of the creator ; it being that very
 one which is most of all agreeable and plea-
 sant to the eye, and which it longest en-
 dures ; and, if any other than that of green
 had been the color of nature, we should
 soon have found the highest inconvenien-
 cies arising from it.

But

LECT. VII.

Other
worlds.

But then this earth is far from being the only scene of nature, in which the divine goodness exerts and displays itself. from the discoveries that have been made by astronomical observations, it seems very evident that the other planets belonging to the same solar system with our earth, are like it inhabited. provision seems to have been made for that purpose according to their respective distances from the sun. and from a provision of this kind actually discovered to us, compared with what we see throughout the whole globe which we ourselves inhabit, we may justly upon the principles of analogie, and with the fairest probabilitie, conclude that the same kind, gracious and benevolent order prevails throughout each of these distinct and separate worlds. and as according to the like observations the fixed stars are probably supposed to be so many suns having a planetarie system belonging to each, how prodigiously, according to this just and natural reasoning or ground of analogie, is our idea of the divine goodness extended ! however, by considering this earth of ours alone, and attending to that prodigious bulk of it, which has been already spoken of, and the

the incessant proofs of goodness that have LECT. VII.
been apparent in it ever since the creation, 
and in every part of it, how can we properly express our idea of so much goodness actually proved and appearing throughout so vast an extent of space and duration, but by calling it infinite? thus from the *actual* effects of it are we taught to conceive of this goodness as being so great, so free, so permanent, so exuberant and overflowing, that it is impossible we should have too high a dependance upon it, or raise our notions and apprehensions too far concerning it. it must needs appear from these considerations, only to be a goodness calling for our most elevated and fervent praises, and laying a foundation for our everlasting triumphs. surrounded as we are with *demonstrations* of a goodness like this, it is not enough to say that downright atheism must needs be the grossest stupidity. but a very lamentable degree of indolence and lethargie must it implicate in our intellectual and moral powers, not to have our souls most deeply impressed with an affecting, lively sense of this divine and all-sustaining love. we are to judge, we say, of the goodness of a man by his actions

LECT. VII. and conduct. in the divine actions and
conduct then, what full and satisfying proof
have we of that goodness, which is divine?
of the degree of a fellow-creature's good-
ness we judge by the number and im-
portance of his beneficent actions. accord-
ing to this manner of determining, what
language can be too strong, or rather what
words suffice, to express the true idea of
the benignitie and beneficence of that God,
who is *good to all, and whose tender mercies
are over all his works?* o then *praise the
Lord with me, and let us exalt his name toge-
ther.* let us not look upon our acknow-
legements of the divine goodness only as a
decent compliment paid to the author of
our natures ; but let us offer them cordi-
ally and affectionately, and with a devotion
corresponding as nearly as possible to the
incontestable evidence we have of it.

Monday, Dec. 25.

A

S E R M O N.

I TIM. iii. 16.

*And without controversie great is the myserie of
godliness: God was manifest in the flesh,
justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached
unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world,
received up into glorie.*

“ **L**ET no man, says bishop Hall, go SERMON
 “ about to entertain the thought of
 “ the great myserie of godliness, but with
 “ a ravished heart, an heart filled with a
 “ gracious composition of love and joy and
 “ wonder.” tho’ therefore much has been
 said in the world, and this too with great
 heat and eagerness, concerning the mean-
 ing of the word myserie, yet it is far from
 G 2 being

SERMON. being my design to enter upon any examination of that debate, or any considerations of that kind at present. in reference to our text, in which you perceive the word to occur, I shall leave every one to understand by it almost what he pleases. nor do I apprehend the critical meaning of the word to be a matter of any great importance here, so long as we rightly understand the thing that is denominated by it; namely, the system of christianitie. here is something called a myserie. now whatever be the meaning of this word, yet the apostle immediately proceeds to give you a very particular description of that which he calls so. and this description we may be very well able to understand, without determining why he calls it so, or being able precisely to adjust the signification of such a word. some by the word myserie seem to intend that which is totally incomprehensible, or a mere collection of words, which have no meaning at all in them. but it is plain this cannot be the interpretation of it here; on account of that clear, explicit and very intelligible description, given of what is called a myserie. by this term, however, may well enough be denoted

something of which we know a great deal, but concerning which there is a great deal more that still remains to be known. and in this sense christianitie may very justly be called a mysterie, without at all derogating from the excellencie of it. nay, the expression does indeed imply such a superior and consummate excellencie in it, as is not to be at once, but only in the gradual advance and progress of the understanding fully comprehended by the mind of man. under this notion of christianitie the apostle himself has given us a very exact and lively representation of it in another of his epistles; that I mean to the Ephesians. he there informs them of its being his tender affectionate prayer to God in their behalf, that “he would grant unto them
“ according to the riches of his glorie, to
“ be strengthened with might by his spirit
“ in the inner man, that Christ might
“ dwell in their hearts by faith, that they
“ being rooted and grounded in love, may
“ be able to comprehend with all saints
“ what is the breadth and length and depth
“ and height, and to know the love of
“ Christ, which passeth knowlege.” here you see the apostle supposes that there is a

SERMON. great deal to be known concerning christianitie, even “the breadth and length and “depth and height” of it, and yet that on another account it “passeth knowledge.” that is to say, there is so much to be known concerning it, that we cannot even by the most diligent studie attain to the whole of that knowlege in the present life. it passes the limits of our present powers. but this is very far from being a reason against the studie of the gospel. on the contrarie, it gives us a very pleasing view of this employment. it points out christianitie to us as a copious, inexhaustible subject, in our contemplation of which we shall always be sure to meet with something, that will be still farther entertaining and satisfactorie to the mind, beyond the amount of that we have already discovered in relation to it. we can never grow wearie of contemplating a subject, which is so great and noble as to exceed the full comprehension even of the most improved and cultivated understanding during this state of mortalitie. on this account then christianitie may justly by St. Paul in our text be called a mysterie. that likewise is very naturally styled a mysterie, which appears

appears even by what we do know and most SERMON.
clearly perceive concerning it, to carry in
it such an eminent degree of dignitie, excellencie, usefulness, worth and importance, as cannot but excite our highest admiration, surpassing, as it may seem to do, all that has ever yet been discovered in the kind, or that imagination itself could have suggested. and on this farther account how justly may christianitie be said to be mysterious? what an astonishing scene of love does it exhibit? how does it surprise and amaze our faculties by that exuberance of goodness to which we owe it! and with what consummate and admirable wisdom is it as a religious institution or moral structure contrived and modeled for promoting the everlasting interests of mankind! “o the depths both of the wisdom and of the knowlege of God! how
“unsearchable are his judgments, and his
“ways past finding out!” the grandeur and excellencie of this religious system are never enough to be admired; never can they be sufficiently extolled in our praises, thanksgivings and adorations on account of them. well then, for these two reasons in conjunction, may christianitie not only be styled a myserie, but a *great* one too. it

SERMON. is a system that furnishes us with a copious and inexhaustible fund of contemplation, and at the same time presents to our view in the several particulars of it, objects the most surprizing, full of dignitie, excellencie and beautie, and beyond all comparison or adequate conception, interesting, great and illustrious. but what does the apostle mean by saying, "*without controversy* great is the myserie of godliness?" by the connexion to which I refer you, as well as by the import of the original word here made use of, it should seem to have been his intention in this expression to remind both Timothy and us of that high degree of clear and unexceptionable evidence, with which the publication of the gospel as a divinely authorized system of religion was accompanied; that "*demonstration of the spirit*" which attended it, and in consequence of which it came after a while to be established over all the world as a doctrine, not only apparently interesting and important, but confessedly true and well-attested. but by no means are we to pass over that other character, which the apostle gives us of "*this great myserie.*" it is a "*myserie of godliness.*"

far

far is he from speaking of it in this language as if it were a thing at all surprising that godliness should be the design of christianitie, or the great end that was aimed at by the publication and establishment of it in the world. from the essential perfections indeed of the divine being, we may most safely conclude on the other hand, that this only could be the ultimate view of it. but the apostle's intention here is to impress our minds with the sentiment, that as godliness is, and necessarily must be the great end and ultimate design of the gospel, so it is in the whole fabric and construction of it most *admirably* fitted to answer this end; that it is a dispensation in the nature and tendencie of it most highly efficacious for this purpose; a scheme in the best manner possible, and with the most exquisite skill contrived for promoting the interest of piety in the heart and in the world.

But let us now procede to the particulars of it as here specified by the apostle. "great
" then," he says, "is the mysterie of god-
" liness: God was manifest in the flesh;" or, as we might with greater emphasis and a more exact conformitie to the original read, a "God was manifest in the flesh,


SERMON. “justified in the spirit, seen of angels,
 “preached unto the Gentiles, believed on
 “in the world, received up into glorie.”
 “a God,” says the apostle, in the first place,
 “was manifest in the flesh.” it was not
 God the sovereign father. “him no man
 “hath seen or can see.” it is one of the
 peculiar attributes of his nature to be invi-
 sible to mortal eye. but the God here
 spoken of was “manifest in the flesh.”
 he was “seen” of men as well as by angels.
 it was not then the God and father of our
 Lord Jesus Christ that is here said to have
 been “manifested in the flesh.” nor yet
 was it on the other hand any of those infe-
 rior beings the angels, any one of which
 might nevertheless upon becoming incar-
 nate, in order to deliver some special mes-
 sage of grace and mercie to mankind, and
 giving authentic attestations of his heavenly
 mission, have been naturally enough styled
 “a God,” since beings much below them,
 even magistrates and earthly princes, are in
 scripture so characterised and denominated.
 but it is not, I say, any one of this sublime,
 angelical order that is spoken of here in
 our text; but a being inconceivably ex-
 alted above them, even God the son, or the
 God

God Christ. he it is, he that “in the be-
 “gining was with God, and” from the
 beginning “was God.” he it is that “was
 “manifest in the flesh, but justified” the
 apostle adds “in the spirit,” by way of
 contrast to the former expression, and so
 both clauses are to be taken in conjunction,
 in order to our entering fully into the sense
 and meaning of them. “a God manifest
 “in the flesh,” might some be ready to
 ask; how can that be! how could divinitie
 and humanitie thus coincide and meet to-
 gether! why truly, says the apostle, “in
 “the flesh,” in the external circumstances
 and mere worldly condition of the person I
 am here speaking of, so little was there of
 this divinitie apparent, that he was on the
 contrarie numbered amongst the meanest of
 the people. he was not only “in the
 “flesh,” but manifested also in the lowest
 circumstances of humanitie. he was not
 only a man, “but a man of sorrows, and
 “acquainted with grief.” others of man-
 kind, as it was declared concerning him in
 prophecy, “hid their faces from him” in
 contempt, far from “seeing any form or
 “comeliness in him, “or any beautie,”
 that they “should desire him;” they

SERMON. “despised and rejected him.” so little appearance or manifestation was there of any inhabiting divinitie in the external circumstances of him, who was thus “manifest in the flesh.” nevertheless, “by the spirit,” by that spirit of infallible truth with which he spoke, and that spirit of power by which this truth was attested, was his claim to divinitie, and our ascriptions of it to him fully justified.” by “this spirit” likewise was he “justified,” or his character asserted, not only as being in the original honors of his nature exalted above angels and arch-angels, and the most glorious, elevated beings of all the heavenly hierarchie, but also as the prophet of God, and as the appointed teacher, instructor and savior of mankind. these are so many characters, which he himself assumed, whilst here upon earth, and which his apostles afterwards did in the most solemn and public manner insist upon as belonging to him. for this reason it was that “his name was called Jesus, because he should save his people,” the people among whom he was born, as likewise all who should profess themselves his disciples, and make the proper improvement of his religion, of what-
ever

ever age or country, "from their sins." SERMON.
and in conformitie to a name at once so interesting, so honorable and so endearing, he declared himself to be come into the world that he might be "the light of it," and that God had "anoointed him to preach "the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives," the captives of sin and the slaves of vice, and recovering of sight "to "the blind," the ignorant and deluded in matters of religion, and in relation to the true happiness of man. to "set at libertie "them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." and in prophecie it had been said of him most suitably to such a name, that in consequence of his appearance, "the people, who sat in darkness should see great light, and that to "them who sat in the region and shadow "of death, light should spring up;" of so much estimation is light in the account which the scriptures give us of the gospel-salvation. a plain sign, that we ourselves have not a right apprehension of it, when we can allow ourselves in despising the *light* of divine truth, and can be content to live in almost the grossest ignorance of it, rather than

SERMON. than be at the pains required in order to
our being acquainted with it. in correspondence likewise to this name or character, with which even at his birth he had been invested, he declares that when he should “ be lifted up on the cross,” this should be in order to “ draw all men unto “ him,” and that he might by expiring upon it “ give his life a ransom for many ;” and that the blood, which there flowed from his pierced hands and feet and side, was “ shed for many for the remission of “ sins.” accordingly he elsewhere assumes to himself the power or authoritie of giving eternal life. “ I give,” he says, “ unto my “ sheep eternal life, and they shall never “ perish, neither shall any pluck them out “ of mine hand. my father, who gave “ them me, is greater than all ; and none “ is able to pluck them out of my father’s “ hand. I and my father are one.” as it is he that gave them to me, we are in this respect one. and the promised salvation of my sheep is secure in mine hands, because it is so in the hands of that sovereign deitie, who has committed them to my care ; and who is too good, too wise, too mightie, ever to permit that trust to be defeated.

defeated. such are the powers laid claim SERMON.
to even by him, who, when he took upon 
him our nature, appeared in "the form of
"a servant:" but yet in all these claims
has he been "justified by the spirit;" that
is, by those "signs and wonders and divers
"gifts of the holy ghost," from which is
arising so ample a testimony to the truth
of his mission, and consequently of these
claims. our savior likewise, tho' according
to his appearance or manifestation "in the
"flesh," he "made himself of no reputa-
"tion," yet how fully was he "*justified*"
to the impartial and discerning eye by that
spirit of pietie and love, which animated
all his conduct, in which we have exhibited
to our view a character not only *justified*
from reproche, not only raised above con-
tempt, but appearing in the highest de-
gree venerable, fair and lovely. well may
he be said to have been justified in the
spirit, in whose *spirit* there was abso-
lutely "no guile." not the least defect in
point of moral temper, but every thing that
was perfective of it. in the character like-
wise, which he assumed as the prophet of
the most high God, how amply did he *justi-*
fie his claim, not only by the miraculous
powers

SERMON. powers which he exerted, but likewise by the very *spirit* itself and genius of that religion, which they were intended to confirm. a religion so worthy of God, in the highest degree honorable to all his perfections, and in the most direct, immediate and efficacious manner conducing to the welfare and supreme felicitie of man, and thus by its native *spirit* and intrinsic excellence recommending itself and its divine author to our warmest approbation and most cordial acceptance. it is added, “seen of angels.” but where, it may be asked, lies the wonder of that? had he not been *seen* of them before? yes; but never “in flesh.” it was a new and astonishing sight to these angelic beings to *see* this God “manifested in “the flesh;” him, whose heavenly dignitie so far superior to their own, they had been wont to gaze at with so much wonder and holy admiration; this very being they now with equal astonishment *see* taking up his abode amongst mortal men, despised, reviled, persecuted, afflicted, exposed to all manner of labors, fatigues, pains and tortures. and here, as it should seem, lies the force and emphasis of this clause in our text, it is said indeed, only “seen of angels.”

but

but the apostle knew that every reader must SERMON.
immediately add in his own reflexions ; seen
with wonder, seen with admiration and sur-
prize. and the sentiment was probably in-
troduced in order to heighten and aggran-
dize our ideas of the condescension of the
son of God in becoming incarnate. nor
could any thing have been more naturally
adapted to this purpose than the pointing it
out as being the object of wondering con-
templation to these high angelic orders. but
he was also in the fourth place, “ preached
“ unto the Gentiles.” his manifestation
“ in the flesh” was intended to be a general
diffusive good ; and to carry in it a most
lively display, specimen, emblem and proof
of that sovereign, divine and universal good-
ness to which we are indebted for it. and
this, tho’ it cannot but appear to us as
being in the highest degree agreeable to all
our natural notions and most obvious rea-
sonings concerning the divine perfections,
was matter of no little astonishment to the
Jews. they were strangely limited and con-
fined in their affections towards mankind,
and were therefore disposed to ascribe the like
limitations even to the divine benevolence
itself ; to look upon the Gentiles, all men
but

SERMON.

but themselves, as being in a manner abandoned and forsaken of God, and their own nation only, as being his favorites and the objects of his delight ; insomuch that they never once thought that the Messiah was to be the savior of any besides the Jews. and it was one of their greatest objections to his gospel, that he professed to come into the world that he might be the redeemer of all. and for this reason it is expressly spoken of in another part of this apostle's writings as a myserie ; that “ the Gentiles should “ be fellow heirs and of the same bodie” with the Jews, “ and partakers” as well as they “ of his promise in Christ by the gospel.” a myserie, which, how unwelcome soever it might be to Jewish prejudices, partialitie, selfishness and bigotry, we ourselves have the highest reason to rejoice in, and with the devoutest affection to be thankful for. since it is in consequence of this very dispensation that we now enjoy such inestimable and glorious privileges ; and have Christ amongst us in order to the having “ Christ within us as the hope of “ glorie.” but farther fifthly, he was not only “ preached unto the Gentiles,” but in consequence of this actually “ believed on “ in

“ in the world.” we call that amidst the SERMON.
events and occurrences in life “ a myste-
“ rie,” which, according to all human ap-
pearance and probabilities, was very un-
likely to have happened. this particular
clause of our text therefore is most natu-
rally introduced by the apostle when speak-
ing of christianitie under the notion in ge-
neral or idea of a mysterie. it was a scheme
or dispensation that carried in it one entire
contradiction to all the prevailing customs
and established modes of the world. “ to
“ the Jews it was a stumbling-block, and
“ to the Greeks foolishness.” all the wis-
dom and power, all the passions and preju-
dices of mankind were armed against it.
so that according to all human appearances,
“ God manifest in the flesh” might have
been “ preached to the Gentiles,” but could
scarce have been “ believed on in the
“ world.” yet mightie was the power of
God to the “ pulling down of these strong
“ holds.” and therefore was he not only
“ preached unto the Gentiles,” but likewise
“ believed on in the world.” he that dur-
ing his abode upon earth was called in con-
tempt “ the son of a carpenter,” reviled
as a “ glutton and a wine-biber, accused
“ 23

SERMON. “ as a blasphemer, treated as a madman,”
 and charged with “ having a devil,” and at length put to death thro’ the prevalence of enraged and virulent malice as a malefactor, was afterwards “ believed on in the “ world,” and that not in some small part of it only, but throughout every region, territorie and quarter of the earth, as “ a “ God manifest in the flesh;” had everywhere churches founded in his name, solemnities appointed to his honor, and hearts devoted to his service. “ so mightily did “ the word of God prevail.” with so much reason may we say, “ this is the lord’s “ doing, and it is *marvelous* in our eyes.” but to heighten and complete the grand idea, which it was the apostle’s design in this passage to give us of the splendor and dignitie of the gospel-scheme, and of the amazing glories that centered in the person of its adorable author ; he adds in the sixth and last place, “ received up into glorie.” once he was manifested “ in the flesh,” appeared in the lowest form of humanitie, and “ being found in fashion as a man, he “ humbled himself.” humiliation indeed ! for he “ became obedient unto death, even “ the death of the cross.” but behold how
 soon

soon the scene is changed. direct your wondering eyes and astonished hearts to the honors with which he is now invested. he has been long since "received into glorie. " God has highly exalted him, and given " him a name above every name, that at " the name of Jesus every knee should " bow." he that was " despised and re- " jected of men," is now adored by angels, and seated at the " right hand" of the sovereign father's throne." that, said our savior once, while here on earth, which is highly esteemed " amongst men, is abomination in " the sight of God." here we see with what abundant reason we may reverse the maxim, and say, that which is despised and of no reputation in the sight of men, carries in it the highest value, merit and acceptableness in the sight of God. reflecting methinks upon those heavenly glories, with which the savior of the world is now invested, our gratitude for all the condescensions of his wonderful incarnation and dying love should instantly break forth into songs of congratulation. BLESSED JESUS, we rejoice in these thy triumphs, in these thy splendid honors, in that illustrious crown thou wearest, and which commands the
reverence


SERMON. reverence and subjection of all the angelic
 } hosts. we join their songs. we gladly take
 our part in their hosanna's, and say with
 them: "worthy art thou, the lamb that
 " was slain, to receive riches and blessing
 " and honor and glorie and power." we
 adore the divine munificence and love,
 which has thus gloriously rewarded that
 unwearied compassion of thine, which was
 exerted for our sakes. and by these re-
 joicing, grateful sentiments we feel our-
 selves, indulge thou condescending savior,
 indulge us in the thought, we feel our-
 selves to become partakers in thy renown.
 but yet after another sort, not exclusive of
 this our present kind of joy, but additional
 to it, and perfective of it, we hope ere long
 to be sharing in thy blifs and honors. for
 by the gracious promises of thy word we
 are taught to believe that thou art "en-
 " tered within the veil as our forerunner."
 this "hope thou hast set before us," that
 "it might be the anchor of our souls both
 " sure and stedfast." and in thy life-time
 here on earth thou wast pleased to pray for
 us in these encouraging, animating terms;
 that we "might be with thee, where thou
 " art, to behold the glorie which thou
 " hadst

“ hadst with the father before the world
“ was.” blessed Jesus, our souls are as-
piring after and longing for it.” “ come
“ Lord Jesus, come quickly.” and as an
earnest of this our promised inheritance,
o that thou mayest now be *manifested* to
each one of us by the efficacious influence
of thy gospel upon our hearts. “ take
“ unto thyself thy great power” and reign
within us. let us not content ourselves
with hearing this blessed gospel “ preached,”
as thro’ the indulgent grace of heaven is
still the privilege enjoyed among us of the
Gentile stock. but may its vital influences
be felt by every power and affection of
our natures. and as we are now professing
in the sight of God and by the solemnities
of his worship, to rejoice that thy name is
“ believed on in the world,” let us mani-
fest the sinceritie of these our solemn pro-
fessions, by suffering this faith to “ work”
in our hearts “ by love.” never, never let
it be said, to the astonishment of the whole
angelic world, that the only-begotten of
the most high did “ manifest himself in
flesh” purely and alone for our sakes, and
that yet we have despised the offers even of
such condescending love, and have chosen
rather

SERMON. rather to renounce our savior than our lusts !
and as we profess to emulate the angelic
host in the celebration of thy praises, and
to make it our ambition to be *hereafter* like
them, may it be the matter of our most
diligent and attentive studie to be like to
them, and like to thee in puritie and inno-
cence of soul even *now* ; knowing as we do,
that for this end thou “ gavest thyself for
“ us, to redeem us from all iniquitie, and
“ to purifie unto thyself a peculiar peo-
“ ple, zealous of good works,” and that
“ without holiness no man shall see the
“ Lord.”

LECT-

LECTURE VIII.

WE have already endeavored to give Lec. VIII.
 you some account of those proofs, 
 which we have of the divine goodness in
 the visible works of the creation; their
 order and their general tendencie to utilitie
 and happiness. and I think these proofs
 must needs appear to those, who duly, dili-
 gently and impartially attend to them,
 to amount to a strict and proper demon-
 stration of such a goodness in the deitie,
 as we and the rest of our fellow-creatures
 of mankind may safely confide in with Joyful
 respect to all our highest interests, and by
 the exertion of which we may firmly be-
 lieve these will be in the most effectual
 manner provided for. but there are still
 other arguments to be insisted upon, which
 afford a very high degree of additional evi-view.
 dence in the point before us. and surely
 we cannot have too much; or be content
 that any thing tending to heighten the
 proof should be omitted. it is here, pro-
 perly speaking, that our all is at stake. if
 God be indeed infinitely and unchangeably
 H good,

LEC. VIII. good, then may I address myself to you
 all; “ and to you in particular, my good
 “ children; and assure you that *all things*
 “ *are yours. whether Paul or Apollos or Ce-*
 “ *phas, any of your fellow-creatures, with*
 “ *whom you may have particular con-*
 “ *nexions; or the world, or life or death,*
 “ *or things present, or things to come; all*
 “ *are yours.* that is, by this presiding and
 “ all-directing goodness of the deitie, they
 “ will be made to turn to your account.
 “ and you may be, as St. Paul declares he
 “ was, *fully persuaded that neither death nor*
 “ *life, nor angels nor principalities nor pow-*
 “ *ers, nor things present, nor things to come,*
 “ *nor heighth nor depth nor any other creature,*
 “ *shall be able to separate us from this love of*
 “ *God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;*”
 having by this great and most illustrious mes-
 senger of peace and mercie been so amply
 displayed and so signally ratified and con-
 firmed. I will therefore procede in my en-
 deavor to corroborate the belief of this
 divine goodness by such other arguments as
 I just now refered to, and which have not
 as yet been insisted upon in this our stated
 inquirie, relative to that and other subjects
 naturally connected with it. now there is

something like what is called an argument LEC. VIII.
a priori that may be produced to this pur- Argument
 pose ; that is, there is an argument to be a priori.

drawn in proof of the divine goodness independent of any actual effects of it, as discerned by us, and which is wholly founded upon those other attributes, which we cannot but ascribe to the divine and sovereign nature. such for instance as the divine power and wisdom, and the independent happiness of the divine being. the latter of these we shall immediately see to follow upon the former two. our present argument therefore, we will, if you please, state as follows: in consequence of this originate, self-derived and independent happiness of the divine being, and the having it in his power with the utmost ease and in the highest perfection to accomplish all his views and purposes, it is manifest that all those occasions and sources of evil dispositions that we know of towards other beings are excluded. “ my dear
 “ children, you have, I dare say, so good
 “ an opinion of the rest of your fellow-
 “ creatures, as to imagine there is none of
 “ them that would do either you or any
 “ man any harm purely for the harm sake,

LEC. VIII. " or were there not some temptation or
 { " seducement inclining him to it; or were
 " it not for some preceding perverseness
 " and corruptness of temper." rashness,
 revenge, envy, ambition, pride, the love
 of shining in the world, of exercising
 power and appearing to be possessed of it,
 care and the fretfulness it occasions, oppo-
 sition of interests, inordinate desires, losses
 and disappointments creating regret and dis-
 gusts; these and the like are the sources of evil
 dispositions and actions among men. nor do
 we ever suppose any one to be malignant
 by nature. even the devils became so out
 of pride and envy; and were so far from
 being originally malicious or evil in their
 nature, that they were indeed as we know
 in their first station the innocent, pure and
 holy angels of God. and would it not be
 very strange that the creator of the world
 should be the only exception to this rule?
 yet must this needs be the case if he be not
 good. because none of those sources of
 malevolence, which we just now mentioned,
 can have any place with respect to the
 deitie on account of his infinite power and
 wisdom and independent happiness. the
 deitie must either be a benevolent being, or
 else

else malevolent and ill-designing. and if Lec. VIII.
 none of the several causes and sources of
 malevolence or ill-will which we can possi-
 bly conceive of, or imagine, can with respect
 to the deitie have any place at all; and if
 on the contrarie there be nothing that we
 know of which in like manner excludes
 the idea of goodness as an attribute belong-
 ing to his nature; this surely we are to
 ascribe to him. these however are confi-
 derations, which naturally tend to heighten
 and confirm our idea of this divine good-
 ness; supposing it to have been already in
 the general proved, as in fact it has been,
 from the actual effects of it. for a self-
 existent being, that is continually and
 every where doing good, must needs be by
 nature good. now what is it that hinders
 the goodness of great numbers among our
 fellow-creatures, of which we are witnes-
 ses, from rising to an inconceivably higher
 degree than human goodness ever yet at-
 tained to, but one or another among those
 things, which have been mentioned as the
 sources of a malignant and evil dispo-
 sition. hence those defects and blemishes
 that we observe even in the best of human
 characters. in some of which benevolence

LEC. VIII. and good-will would appear with a most
 { astonishing lustre, were it not for the op-
 position it meets with, the depression it is
 subject to, and the impediments that lie in
 the way of it, arising from the evil tem-
 pers of others, and the disturbances which
 these occasion in their own breasts. but every
 thing of this kind being absolutely and of
 necessity excluded from our idea or notion
 of deitie, it being absolutely impossible that
 any the least impediment whatsoever should
 interrupt the free, exuberant flow of divine
 benevolence, this naturally tends to give
 us the largest apprehensions of its exten-
 siveness and permanencie. it is not un-
 usually observed that men are then most dis-
 posed to communicate happiness, when they
 are most of all easie, happie and contented
 in themselves; and in the preceding re-
 flexions we see some ground for an observa-
 tion like this. God then must be infinitely
 and immutably good, because he is infinitely
 happie.

Other

But secondly, a very strong argument
 may be drawn in proof of the divine good-
 ness from that which is actually existing
 among other beings, in the same manner as
 we proved the divine power and the divine
 wisdom,

wisdom, from the actual existence of power LEC. VIII.
 and wisdom as the qualities of other beings. }

“ I hope, my children, you have not for-
 “ got that argument. it was shewn, you
 “ know, that God must needs have more
 “ power than any one man, because every
 “ man’s power is derived from him ; and
 “ for the same reason he must have more
 “ power than the power of all mankind put
 “ together ; and for the same reason still
 “ more than all the power of angels added to
 “ this intire sum or aggregate of human
 “ power, because of all angelic power as well
 “ as human, he alone is the source.” in
 like manner it was argued with respect to
 the divine wisdom. nor can any thing more
 directly tend to fix and ascertain our ideas
 of the greatness of the divine power and of
 the extent of the divine wisdom, than the
 attending to and revolving in our minds proofs.

some such reflexions as these. but now in
 the very same manner may the goodness of
 God be proved, not only to be a real attri-
 bute of his nature, but likewise to be inex-
 pressibly large, free, copious, and in the
 highest degree perfect. “ you, my dear
 “ children, I dare say, would do every
 “ thing that lies in your power to make

LEC. VIII. “ another being happier. and you have, I
 “ doubt not, the same opinion of your fel-
 “ low-children, of your parents, and of vast
 “ numbers of your acquaintance.” now,
 if all this goodness were, as it were, laid
 together, and supposed to constitute the
 temper and disposition of some one among
 mankind, and to it were added in order to
 constitute still the temper of some one be-
 ing, the goodness of all the most sublimely
 generous souls that ever lived upon earth,
 the goodness of all the angels and hosts of
 heaven ; in short, every degree of goodness
 from the highest to the lowest, that was
 ever possessed by any rational or moral
 agent whatsoever, would it not form a
 most amazingly perfect character of good-
 ness ; a goodness which could never be ex-
 hausted, never fail or disappoint our ex-
 pectations ? now nothing can be more evi-
 dent than that the divine and sovereign
 being must be possessed of a degree of good-
 ness beyond what this whole aggregate of
 love and benevolence would amount to ;
 this whole sum of goodness belonging to
 all other natures whatsoever, being in fact
 derived from and communicated by him.
 for he is the author and giver “ of every
 “ good

“*good* and perfect gift.” the very quan- Lec. VIII.
 tity therefore or sum of goodness actually
 subsisting among other beings is a direct
 and of itself sufficient proof of his perfect
 goodness. and indeed what more naturally
 to be imagined, than that the supreme
 creator should make the rational and moral
 agents, which he produces, in the image of
 himself? if the devil, for instance, had it
 in his power to make other beings, where
 would be the wonder, if he should fill their
 hearts with spite and malice in his original
 formation of them? as God therefore in
 his creation “has written the contrary law
 “of love upon our hearts,” we may from
 hence certainly conclude that his own moral
 nature is the direct contrary to that of
 malevolence, namely kind and gracious.
 even the inanimate creation bears the image
 of God’s goodness by its universal tendencie
 to good, which would be altogether unac-
 countable, if the author of it were not good.
 but man is the still nearer and more exact
 image of deitie, by having the very disposition
 itself of goodness infused into his nature,
 and the “law of kindness” inscribed upon
 his heart.

LEC. VIII.

Moral admiration.

Moral order.

But there is, thirdly, another thing remarkable in the constitution and frame of man, which seems strongly to evince the goodness of his creator, and that is, that we are not only so formed as to be disposed to do good ourselves, and to be in our inclinations kind and benevolent, but likewise to love and admire goodness in others, and to hate its contrarie. now this is a strong proof of the goodness of our creator in two different views. first, as it has so apparent and powerful a tendencie to the production of general happiness, by encouraging goodness in others, and animating the temper in ourselves. and then, secondly, if God were not good but the reverse, and one or other he must be, he would, by this constitution of us, have made us with a disposition to hate himself; which it is not surely to be imagined he would do. again, fourthly, in the moral order of things relative to mankind, it is observable that they are not only so constituted as to produce goodness and the love of goodness, but also to reward and honorably to distinguish it. “ tho’ the just and the unjust, “ the unthankful, as well as the good,” share in the common mercies of providence, yet

yet are the good in proportion to their Lec. VIII.
 goodness distinguished by peace of conscience, by reputation, by well ordered and prosperous affairs, (a) by lively expectations and animating prospects. now what can be more unlikely than that a being, who was not himself good, who did not love and delight in goodness, should so plan and regulate his own constitution of things, as that in the series and order of them this quality should be so perpetually rewarded in others? I here take it for granted that such is the constitution of man as we have now been representing it to be. the proof of these things will naturally come to be treated of in that other part of our intended series of discourse, of which man himself is to be the subject. and I think from all that has been said concerning his inward constitution and moral frame, from his bodily structure and organization, from the harmonie and friendly tendencie so visible

H 6

and

(a) Take this for a truth, to which oracles are fables; that never any man commits a sin to shun an inconvenience, but one way or other, soon or late, he plunges himself by that act into a far worse inconveniency than that he would decline. *Boyle on Customary Swearing*, P. 45.

LEC. VIII and conspicuous in every part of the animal creation, “the heavens above, the
 “earth beneath,” and the waters of the mightie ocean, it must needs be evident, that there cannot be any truth more clearly and firmly established than this of the divine benevolence. and I have been the larger in treating upon this particular attribute of the deitie, not only on account of its transcendent moment and importance according to its own immediate nature, being the great center of all our hopes, that without which all the seeming loveliness of nature would be but rudeness and deformitie; but likewise because this being once clearly established, the other moral attributes of the divine nature are proved of course, being indeed necessarily involved in the true idea or notion of this; so that it will be even altogether needless to produce any distinct arguments in confirmation of them. nor indeed should we be able to produce any to this purpose, but what would have their foundation in that goodness already proved, and be derived from the supposition of it, all therefore that we have here to do, is to shew briefly, how it is that these other attributes do all of them flow out of this;

con-

Moral at-
 tributes

in

constituting as it were so many parts or ^{Lec. VIII.} branches of it. thus for example, if God ^{general.} be infinitely and immutably good, he must of necessitie be infinitely and immutably holy. “ for I suppose, my good children, “ your idea of holiness is this; that it “ consists in the approbation and love of “ goodness both in our own character and “ in that of other beings, and in an answerable dislike of its contrarie; an aversion to every thing that would taint or “ corrupt the moral character, and make it “ to degenerate towards the temper of “ malignitie or ill-will.” the more firmly likewise the temper of goodness is established in any moral agent, and the less likelihood there is of his ever deviating from it, so much the more holy do we esteem him. now on all these accounts, if God be an infinitely good and gracious being, it cannot but follow, that he is an infinitely pure and holy being. because we see that goodness among men in proportion to its prevalency in the mind and temper naturally and unavoidably excites a love of and complacencie in the like character, wherever we behold it; an hatred of its contrarie, and a generous indignation at the

LIC. VIII. the observed indulgence of malignitie and
 } ill-will. “ God therefore must, as you
 “ know, my dear children, the scripture
 “ expresse it, be a being, who is of *pur*
 “ *eyes than to behold iniquitie*, that is, with
 “ approbation, or otherwise than with the
 “ highest abhorrence and displeasure. and
 “ on the contrary he must be a being who
 “ *loves righteousness* and righteous persons.
 “ so that to all good people there is the
 “ greatest comfort to be derived from the
 “ consideration of the divine holiness, as
 “ we shall hereafter have occasion to shew
 “ you more particularly.” and then lastly,
 as nothing can be more evident, agreeably
 to what has just now been insisted upon,
 than that the more firmly any one is *rooted*
and grounded in love, so much the less like-
 lihood there is of his ever deviating into
 the contrary temper ; that being who “ is
 “ *love*” itself, pure and infinite love, and
 the origin both of all that happiness and
 of all that benevolence, that is any-where
 existing throughout the whole scene of
 nature, must needs be at an infinite remove
 and distance from all moral depravation ;
 that is to say, he must be infinitely holy,
 so that there cannot be a possibilitie of the
 least

least deflection in his nature from what is Lec. VIII.
 purely and consummately good. (a) and
 then again, as to the justice of God, “ if
 “ you are satisfied and convinced, as my
 “ dear children I hope you are, that he
 “ is infinitely good, you may be very sure
 “ that his justice does not mean cruelty
 “ and revenge, or the punishing offenders
 “ with the utmost rigor and extremity of
 “ power ; for all this is directly contrary
 “ to the plain, essential idea or notion of
 “ goodness. and therefore, if this were
 “ the meaning of God’s justice, you would
 “ by ascribing it to him, deprive him of
 “ his goodness.” but God is good as well
 as just ; and therefore we are to form such
 a notion of his justice as is compatible and
 consistent with his goodness. nay, from
 his goodness we shall be certainly able to
 infer his justice according to the genuine
 and true idea of it. thus for instance, a
 good king that loves his subjects, will for
 that very reason, and because he is so, and
 for no other reason, take care that justice
 shall

(a) “ The holiness of God,” Dr. Clarke
 defines to be “ in general, that disposition of
 “ the divine nature, by which he is infinitely re-
 “ moved from all *moral evil whatsoever*.” See
 his Sermons, Vol. II. Sermon VIII. p. 178.

LEC. VIII. shall be duly administered throughout his
 kingdom, and that wholsom laws shall
 be well and faithfully executed. in like
 manner the laws of God's moral govern-
 ment are calculated for the good of those
 who are the subjects of it, to which, in con-
 sequence of his goodness, he had a sole view
 in the original establishment of it. and for
 the same reason he will be just, that is, he
 will inviolably adhere to those laws in his
 continued government of the universe. they
 are calculated for the good of the universe.
 to depart from them therefore would not be
 goodness but the contrary. besides, mercie
 or forgiveness, " my good children, you
 " know, is another attribute of the deitie.
 " you must therefore needs form such an
 " idea of the divine justice as shall be con-
 " sistent with mercie, that is, with the
 " forgiveness of offenders upon their re-
 " pentance. and that mercie is indeed in
 " this sense a real attribute of deitie, you
 " cannot but be sensible must immediately
 " follow from his goodness. you know
 " very well, that the higher opinion you
 " have of any one's goodness, the more
 " certainly and joyfully you can depend
 " upon receiving forgiveness from him, if
 " ever

“ ever you happen to offend him, upon ^{Lec. VIII.}
 “ signifying a suitable and just concern for
 “ having done so. you take it for granted
 “ that he must be merciful and forgiving,
 “ because you know him to be good. if
 “ then the divine being be supremely and
 “ immutably good, he must for that reason
 “ alone, and you cannot want any other to
 “ be assigned, he must, I say, for that rea-
 “ son alone be considered as being in the
 “ highest degree merciful and propitious.”

And now from what has thus far been
 delivered concerning the several attributes
 of deitie, concerning his goodness itself, as
 well as in relation to the divine wisdom and
 power, “ we shall, I hope, my good chil-
 “ dren, be prepared for answering without
 “ any difficultie, those objections, which ^{Objections.}
 “ have sometimes been insisted upon in re-
 “ lation to this now mentioned moral attri-
 “ bute of his nature. you may perhaps
 “ be almost ready to think that, if the
 “ goodness of God be so plain and clear a
 “ point as has now by us been alleged, it
 “ must needs be very strange that any ob-
 “ jections at all should ever have been
 “ made to the belief or supposition of it;
 “ and to imagine that such objections actu-
 “ ally

LEC. VIII. “ ally advanced against the principle, must
“ alone be sufficient to shew, that it is not
“ indeed so clear and evident as we have
“ been saying. but you are to consider that
“ there is nothing so plain or evident but
“ what may by some means or another
“ come to be denied. and on the other
“ hand it is observed by one that was him-
“ self famous for philosophising, that there
“ was never any thing so foolish or absurd,
“ which had not by some philosopher or
“ other been asserted. and in the present
“ subject, what men of candid and modest
“ dispositions have at most considered only
“ as difficulties, those of more forward
“ and presumptuous spirits have formed
“ into direct objections against this divine
“ attribute. and it would increase their
“ opinion still of the force of these objec-
“ tions, and dispose them the more to tri-
“ umph in this particular, were those who
“ asserted the divine goodness to decline
“ the consideration of them; nor is the
“ consequence at all to be feared. I am
“ not for my own part, the least appre-
“ hensive of any force in these objections,
“ that can at all impair the strength of
“ those arguments that we have been so
“ briefly

“ briefly touching upon in proof of this great LEC. VIII.
 “ point. nay, I am not without hope of be-
 “ ing able to shew you, that the very things
 “ objected to are in realitië confirmations
 “ of the divine goodness, and not repug-
 “ nancies to the idea or notion of it.”
 however they may, I doubt not, be so ob-
 viated and cleared up, as to leave the mind
 intirely satisfied in the belief of it. but
 the discussion of these particulars, to-
 gether with the inferences that are to be
 deduced from the consideration of this di-
 vine attribute, the duties founded upon it
 in its connexion with the other attributes
 of the divine nature, and the conclusion of
 this particular subject, we must refer to the
 next opportunitie.

LECTURE IX.

LECT. IX. “**K**NOW, says the admirable Epictetus, that the principal point of religion consists in having right sentiments of the Gods. as for instance, to believe that they really are, that they govern the world with goodness and justice, that they are to be obeyed, that men ought to acquiesce in what they do, and indisputably follow their orders, as proceeding from a most excellent and accomplished intelligence; for thus principled you will never charge them with ought, and you will not complain that they have deserted you.” this, allowing only for that particular expression the Gods, which however was far from being meant in this author in contrariety to the notion of one supreme and eternal deitie, is language exceeding just and interesting. I therefore reflect with pleasure upon my having endeavored in several of these our evening exercises, to establish your minds in a firm and rational belief of the divine goodness. by this means,
far

far from being terrified at the thought of LECT. IX. the divine power, or having any formidable apprehensions of the wisdom, eternitie, omnipresence or immensitie of deitie, or of his absolute knowlege of all hearts and of all events, you will be led to look upon all these divine attributes as being only the residence and seat, or else the instruments and agents of a benevolence that is infinite and unchangeable, and to triumph in them all, as affording you the firmest securitie in conjunction with this amiably presiding principle, that all the events of nature shall conspire to the most happie and glorious result; and that “no labor of love” in fulfilling the duties of life, or of patience in bearing the sorrows of it, shall be without its ample reward from that God, “who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.” all that is farther wanting to complete our design so far as relates to this particular branch of our originally intended series or order of discourse, is to consider on the one side the objections that have been made to this doctrine of the divine goodness, and on the other the duties which naturally result from our acknowledgement of it. as to the former of these particulars,
or

LECT. IX. or the objections that have been insisted upon to the prejudice and disparagement of this all-chearing doctrine, they have been founded partly upon the evils of the present life, and partly upon the apprehended torments of that which is to come. and there is still a farther division of those belonging to the former class, into the evil which is natural and that which is moral. the latter of these has been generally thought to carrie in it much the greatest difficultie with respect to the reconcileableness of it to the perfection of the divine attributes. but for my own part I cannot see the matter altogether in this light. miserie or natural evil has all the same seeming repugnancie in it to the idea of benevolence as vice or moral evil has to holiness or moral puritie, so far as that is to be distinguished from this very goodness itself. nay, the very turpitude and malignitie of sin itself consists in its being a temper or disposition of mind that alienates a man's affections from a just concern for the happiness of his fellow-men. so that why an infinitely benevolent being should make a creature capable of falling into miserie, seems to be a question altogether as intricate as why

Evil.

an

an infinitely holy being should make a creature capable of sinning. nor can it be at all more difficult for the omnipotence and infinite wisdom of deitie to produce a preponderancie of good out of the sins of mankind, and to make them subserve the purposes of his own benevolence, than to do the same in relation to the calamities and afflictions which befall us. LECT. IX.

And this leads me to mention it in the first place as a consideration that gives great relief to the mind under the apprehension of the ills of life, that from our natural conceptions concerning the greatness of the divine power, nothing can be more reasonable than to conclude, that those things which in the great affairs of divine providence carrie in them the most threatening and formidable aspect, and seemingly the most contrarie to the intentions of benevolence, may by that power be so controlled and managed in relation to the consequences and effects of them, as even to subserve the designs of this very benevolence itself. the power of God is, as we have seen, a power exceeding all the united force and energie of nature, and of all the thinking active beings in the universe combined.

LECT. IX. bined. it is a power therefore that must necessarily be able to govern and have under its management all these distinct and separate energies. besides, that all other power is in fact according to the purport of the proof alleged in support of that other sentiment, an effect produced by this. and the potter surely has "power over his own clay." and God therefore for certain over his own creatures, so as to effectuate by their means whatever views his benevolence shall dictate. now what more easie than to conceive that by a power like this effects may be made to arise out of the ills of life, and such a turn given to them, if I may so express it, of which our own scantie and limited views can at present afford us no idea; but which may be altogether as pleasing to us, when we come to discern it, as any of the most amiable and inviting appearances of nature whatsoever. we oftentimes do this or that, and when we begin to see what is likely to be the consequence, say that, if we had thought of that, we would not have done so. and why, but because it is not in our power to controule or set aside this consequence? but it is not thus in relation to the deitie. by the

absolute perfection and plenitude of his LECT. IX.
power, he can with infinite ease prevent
any of the natural evils of life from terminating in a greater quantitie of trouble and affliction to his creatures than he sees to be necessarie for their good. and whatever apparent or natural tendencie there may be in this or another vicious action of any of them, as in itself alone considered, towards the production of mischief and miserie upon the whole, he can by introducing other natural tendencies of a different kind, and that shall be of superior force, intirely prevent that mischief, and avert the threatening and apprehended ill. the like manner of reasoning is applicable in the second place to the wisdom of God. as by his power he can controle any event, so as that it shall in fact minister to the purposes and views of his own benevolence, how contrary soever may be its present aspect; so likewise his wisdom being complete and boundless, what wonder if in innumerable instances, where we can see nothing but calamitie and distress, he should be able most clearly and certainly to discern some highly beneficial purposes that may be served by the apparent ill? thus

LECT. IX. the ingenious artificer out of a rude and
 { shapeless mass of metal, in which another
 can see nothing but deformitie, and con-
 cerning which he might be apt to conclude
 that it can be good for little or nothing, can
 by the exertion of his skill and application of
 his art produce a most elegant and beautiful
 Statuary. statue, which, for want of the like skill
 and abilities, we could never have effected,
 and which would be to the last degree sur-
 prizing and astonishing to one who had
 seen such a shapeless mass of metal, but
 had never seen or heard of a statue that had
 been produced from it. in like manner
 shall we hereafter be surprized by innume-
 rable beauties, blessings and joys which we
 shall see to have arisen, in consequence of
 the mightie power and infinite wisdom of
 the deitie, out of what may now appear to
 us in the highest degree foreign to any such
 effect. (a) but this indeed I would chuse
 to

(a) And here, though in a place less proper
 than I might have chosen, if I had timely
 remembered it, I shall both in reference to the
 extraordinary accidents that sometimes happen
 in *crises's*, and more generally to the seemingly
 irregular *phænomena* of the universe, venture to
 offer to you a notion, that perhaps you will not
 dislike.

to make a distinct observation upon the present topic, namely in the third place, that in the eternitie of God's duration we may find the highest satisfaction in relation to those various ills of life, which have been so much the theme and subject of

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com-

dislike. I think then that, when we consider the world and the physical changes that happen in it with reference to the divine wisdom and providence; the arguments for the *affirmative* ought, in their kind, to have more force than those for the *negative*. for it seems more allowable, to argue a providence from the exquisite structure and symmetry of the mundane bodies and the apt subordination and train of causes, than to infer from some physical *anomalies*, that things are not framed and administered by a wise author and rector. For the characters and impressions of wisdom that are conspicuous in the curious fabric and orderly train of things, can with no probability be referred to blind chance, but must be to a most intelligent and designing agent. whereas on the other hand, besides that the *anomalies* we speak of are incomparably fewer than those things which are regular and are produced in an orderly way; besides this, I say the divine maker of the universe being a most free agent, and having an intellect infinitely superior to ours, may in the production of seemingly irregular *phænomena*, have ends unknown to us, which even the *anomalies* may be very fit to compass. Boyle's Inquiry into the Notion of Nature, p. 244, 245.

LECT. IX. complaint. the power, the wisdom, the
 { goodness of God are all eternal. and surely
 in the eternal exercise of these attributes
 there must needs be room and opportunitie
 abundantly sufficient for educing the most
 happie consequences out of those various
 evils which are at present appearing, but
 which nevertheless in comparison of eter-
 nitie are but of a moment's duration. *our*
light affliction, as the apostle most excel-
 lently and charmingly observes, *our light*
affliction whether arising out of what we
 call natural evils, or out of the evil actions
 of men and their mischievous intentions
 towards ourselves, *which is but for a moment,*
worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal
weight of glorie. “ my good children, re-
 “ member this maxim, imbibe this truth,
 “ establish it in the *thought of your hearts* ;
 “ and you will never think of repining
 “ against providence, or of looking upon
 “ any of its dealings towards you, as
 “ being any ways harsh or severe. for,
 “ can it think you be natural, can it be
 “ just or decent to insist upon a moment's
 “ pain as an objection against the good-
 “ ness of that God, who is designing you
 “ for an eternitie of happiness, and who
 “ will

“ will make even this momentarie pain LECT. IX.

“ contribute to the completion of that

“ happiness?” and then farther, fourthly,

not only is God eternal, but his providence

likewise as to the objects about which it is

conversant, is immense and boundless in

the extent of it. so that in the objective

scene of divine government, as well as in

the duration of it, there is room for a pro-

digious degree of preponderating good to

take place and to arise even out of those

very evils, that you or I may be complain-

ing of. it is easie for us to conceive, in

general, tho’ it be not easie for us exactly

and minutely to discern at present, how

that (which we call our affliction may be

operating to the good and happiness of

some other beings. frequent instances of

this kind we actually see; and from hence

we may naturally conclude that there are

others of the like sort in the great plan of

providence, not as yet perceived by us. so

that the afflictions of life may have this

double good in them, however grievous

they may seem to us at present, that, whilst

they are contributing to the final and ever-

lasting happiness of those who labor under

them, they may be the means of no slight

LECT. IX. or inconsiderable blessing to those who do
 not. and thus you see that in all the
 other attributes of deitie there is abundant
 ground of consolation with respect to the
 evils of life, and that they all conspire in
 enabling us to reconcile with ease these
 evils to the perfection of his goodness.

But perhaps it may not be amiss to il-
 lustrate these reflexions by an instance or
 two in fact. “ I doubt not, my good
 “ children, but you have read, and found
 “ it to be an high entertainment to you,
 “ the historie of Joseph. you remember,
 “ to be sure, how his brethren envied him
 “ on account of his appearing to be hap-
 “ pier and more deserving than themselves,
 “ and they were resolved, if their own
 “ spite and ill-nature could effect it, to
 “ make him otherwise. they studied by
 “ all the means they could think of to pro-
 “ voke and incense, to plague and tor-
 “ ment him. and, as for poor Jacob his
 “ father, he was almost at his wits’ end for
 “ the loss of this his son, whom he sup-
 “ posed to be dead. here was a scene of
 “ great cruelty, and seemingly very af-
 “ flictive and calamitous; and yet you
 “ remember how it turned out at last.”
 this

this very Joseph came afterwards by means LECT. IX.
of this very persecution to be a great man
in Egypt. by which I do not mean only
that he came to be in a very high station
in the court of Pharoah, tho' that be true.
but yet it is not high station alone that
makes a great man. but Joseph was good
and therefore great. he employed that
influence which by this means he became
possessed of for the good of others. and it
is surprizing to reflect upon the innumera-
ble good consequences which followed upon
his being sold by his brethren. by means
of it the whole land of Egypt was saved
from a famine. and not only so, but his
father Jacob and his family, and even his
brethren, who thus evilly entreated him,
were by this means supplied with the ne-
cessarie provisions of life. so that had it
not been for this very event, of which
amongst other unwelcome scenes the good
old man so bitterly complained, saying,
“ all these things are against me,” he and
all his family must have been starved. and
by this event likewise a way was made for
his settlement with them in the land of
Goshen, a part of Egypt, where they be-
came a prosperous and a flourishing people.

LECT. IX. among whom after their departure out of
 { Egypt the true God was signally known and
 worshiped amidst the surrounding idolatrie of
 the heathen world. here then we have one
 most apparent and conspicuous instance of
 God's bringing good, a prodigious, ama-
 zing, inexpressible quantitie of good out of
 one single occurrence seemingly not a little
 calamitous, and actually proceeding from a
 very high degree of real guilt and iniquitie.
 and why may it not be thus in the universal
 and everlasting government of God with
 respect to every evil event, and to all the
 calamities of human life? I might like-
 wise mention to you another most eminent
 and striking illustration of this particular,
 and that is the crucifixion of our Lord
 Jesus. Jesus Christ. could any thing ever excede
 or equal the malignitie of that spite and
 envy with which his enemies persecuted
 this meek and holy "lamb of God, in
 " whose mouth there was no guile?" could
 any thing be more enormously wicked, or
 have a greater appearance of calamitie in
 human affairs, than that he who was
 " holy, harmless, undefiled and separate
 " from sinners, and who was continually
 " doing good," should be cut off in the very
 prime

prime of life by the rage of his enemies, LECT. IX.
and put to death as if he had been the worst
of malefactors? yet so great, so infinitely
great were the benefits and advantages to
arise from hence, all well and most exactly
known to the divine all-seeing mind, for
which reason the malice of these enemies
of our Lord was suffered by divine provi-
dence to take its own way; so great, I say,
were the benefits and blessings to arise from
this event, that our savior is said in scrip-
ture to have been "delivered by the deter-
"minate counsel and fore-knowlege of
"God." it was by this very crucifixion
of the Lord of life, that he became the
savior of the world. and the very blood
their malice spilt was designed to wash away
the sins of the world, to be a propitiatorie,
atoning sacrifice for them; and by this
means to be the ground and foundation of
eternal happiness to all who in holie faith
and humble penitence applie its saving
benefits to themselves. had it not been
for the shedding of this most precious blood
upon the cross, there had been no such
thing as the Christian name or Christian
religion now among mankind. with these
instances before our eyes, how can we think

LECT. IX. any longer of insisting upon the evils of life as objections to the goodness of God? have we not in consequences and effects like these, some of the most signal and illustrious proofs of it? “ and indeed do you not “ observe, my good children, what tempests we sometimes have in summer, and “ what severe and pinching cold oftentimes in winter? I do, sir. but perhaps “ you may be ready to wish that nought “ like this might happen; and that you “ were never more to feel the blustering “ winds or piercing cold. “ you would, “ however, my child, act very foolishly “ and too much like a child in doing so. “ for you know storms and tempests, as I “ have already told you, cleanse and purify the air and prevent plagues, pestilence and death. and by the operations “ of a winter-season that vegetative power “ is communicated to the earth, without “ which the corn, notwithstanding all the “ invigorating beams of the sun, would “ never grow in summer. now afflictions “ answer the very same purposes in the moral “ world, as do storms and tempests and the “ blasting winter cold in the visible and “ external scene of nature. they are salutary

"tarie and needful punishments and re-
 "straints to the bad. they are fatherly } LECT. IX.
 "chastisements and gracious discipline to
 "the good. the scripture always speaks
 "of them as being so intended: and thou-
 "sands there are who have found them so
 "to be. they are one natural means of
 "promoting virtue and goodness, and con-
 "sequently happiness; and therefore could
 "not but have a part (a) in the plan of
 "God's unerring and most gracious pro-
 "vidence; as having an highly beneficial
 "use and reference upon the whole, and
 "being at the same time in themselves of
 "a very transient nature. and they answer
 "these ends in a manner altogether di-
 "stinct, peculiar and wholly appropriate.
 "never therefore look upon them as ob-
 "jections to God's providence. you have
 "a kind, indulgent father, it may be,
 "who, as you yourselves are ready to ac-
 "knowledge, is in all his actions consult-
 "ing your good, excepting perhaps in one
 "single instance or two of a discipline that
 "may be somewhat severe, which you
 I 6 " know

(a) See Discourses on the Parables of our blessed Savior and the Miracles of his holy Gospel, Vol. III. Sermon VIII. p. 189, 190.

LECT. IX. “ know not at present how to account for,
 “ and are at a loss how to reconcile to the
 “ main and general bent of his conduct
 “ towards you. would it not, think you,
 “ be both very ungrateful and very absurd
 “ in you to deny his goodness on account
 “ of a single instance or two of seeming
 “ severitie? and do you not rather still
 “ believe him to be a perfectly good and
 “ every way gracious father, and that he
 “ has some good end to answer by this
 “ severitie, which bye-and-bye you your-
 “ self shall perceive? now all the evils
 “ of this life are infinitely less in compari-
 “ son with those lasting good effects, which
 “ by the power and wisdom of the sove-
 “ reign deitie they will be made to pro-
 “ duce, than even the slightest imaginable
 “ instance of severitie in a parent, who in
 “ every other action you yourself would
 “ confess appeared to your fullest satisfac-
 “ tion gracious and benign. remember
 “ eternitie, I say again, remember eternitie,
 “ and you will not then suspect the good-
 “ ness of your heavenly father.”

And now as to the apprehended torments
 of the world to come; these likewise have
 been thought inconsistent with the good-
 ness

ness of God. some would not have God to LECT. IX.
 punish the wicked at all hereafter. but I Future pu-
nishments.
 am sure it would be no proof of his good-
 ness not to do it; but rather of indifference
 at least to the happiness of his creatures, if
 not of a design to involve them in universal
 ruin. “ should you, my child, think it
 “ any mark of goodness in king George,
 “ were he to open all those prisons, where
 “ so many of his wicked subjects are con-
 “ fined, and punished for their crimes, and
 “ give them the libertie to go where they
 “ would and do what they pleased; and
 “ then signifie by public proclamation,
 “ that for the future no man should be
 “ punished, let him commit never so many
 “ disorders; rob, steal, plunder and kill.”
 some future punishments then there must
 be, and very terrible they may prove with-
 out at all exceeding in degree what good-
 ness itself will dictate. and this you may
 be sure will be the measure of them. God
 will punish hereafter as a being “ who
 “ hates iniquitie.” but he will punish too
 as a being “ who remembers mercie, and
 “ whose compassions are infinite, who de-
 “ sireth not the death of a sinner, but had
 “ rather that he should return and live,
 “ who

LECT. IX. “ who would have all men to be saved and
 “ to come to the knowledge of the truth ;
 “ and who can do all his pleasure.” (a)

(a) *Justice is the justice of goodness, and so cannot delight to punish ; it aims at nothing more than the maintaining and promoting the laws of goodness, and hath always some good end before it, and therefore would never punish except some farther good were in view. Smith's Select Discourses, p. 153. and Plato in his Protagoras observes that no well-advised man ever punishes another for having done wickedly, but only that he may not do so for the time to come, and in order to prevent others from doing the like.—ὅτι παρελθόντος ἕνεκα αδικήματος—αλλά τὸ μέλλοντος χάριν. Op. p. 288.*


LECTURE X.

WE have been insisting of late upon LECT. X.
the being, nature and attributes
of God distinctly. in particular we have
treated at large and somewhat copiously
upon his goodness, have pointed out the
several clear and convincing proofs we have
of it, have endeavored to illustrate, to ex-
plain and to enforce them; and to answer
such objections as have been made to it.
these are topics of infinitely higher import-
ance than any other that can possibly come
under our investigation or review. religion
is the noblest subject of human contem-
plation, and these are the noblest subjects in
religion. “ but yet, my good children,
“ it is of the greatest importance for you
“ to be informed and to remember it as
“ long as you live; that it is not the
“ highest degree that you can in the best
“ use of your own reason and exercise of
“ your own judgment and understanding
“ attain to of knowlege in matters of reli-
“ gion, that will be sufficient for your ob-
“ taining the divine favor, which is to be
“ the

LECT. X. “ the grand and most earnest desire of your
“ heart, it being not only that which alone
“ can make you happy, but as it is like-
“ wise your indispensable and essential duty
“ by choosing God for your portion and
“ your sovereign good, to be ascribing to
“ him that honor which his perfections
“ naturally demand from us. it is not,
“ I must remind you, my dear children,
“ even such knowledge as this, however
“ perfect in its kind, without your re-
“ ducing it into practice, and making it
“ the rule of your temper and guide of
“ your life, that can constitute your
“ happiness, or put you in possession of
“ that truest and highest good, of which
“ your nature is capable. to think rightly
“ of God’s goodness, to conceive of it as
“ large, diffusive, universal, boundless,
“ unchangeable, everlasting ; this is think-
“ ing very honorably of him. these are at
“ once the most lovely and the most accu-
“ rate sentiments that you can form con-
“ cerning him. but still he will not accept
“ or be pleased with you on this account
“ alone. for it is possible that you may
“ have all these worthy apprehensions of
“ him, and yet be very negligent in respect
“ to

“ to that duty, which you are owing to LECT. X.
“ him. and if so, then the better thoughts
“ you have of God, the greater must be
“ your guilt in not acting this obedient
“ part towards him. if a rebel were to Rebel.
“ acknowlege upon all occasions that his
“ sovereign was a good and a gracious
“ prince, that he himself had experienced
“ his lenitie and kindness, and had long
“ enjoyed the benefits of his protection
“ and care, and had possessed many great
“ and precious privileges under his auspi-
“ cious reign, would not this, think you,
“ greatly heighten and increase the guilt
“ of his rebellion? just so it is in religion.
“ to know God and to believe in him, ac-
“ cording to the account or representation
“ that has been laid before you in relation
“ to his being and perfections, but yet to
“ pay no regard to his precepts and laws,
“ must needs be at once the most horrid
“ guilt and the deepest miserie to beings of
“ our rank and nature, capable as we are
“ of paying a voluntary obedience to the
“ great ruler of the world, and account-
“ able for not doing so. you know and
“ can recollect, I doubt not, what our
“ savior says to his own disciples; *if ye*
“ *know*

LECT. X. “ *know these things, happie are ye if ye do*
“ *them.* now this plainly implies, that if
“ they did not do or practise *these things*,
“ their knowlege of them alone would not
“ suffice for their happiness. you will
“ therefore now, I hope, be glad to hear of
“ those duties which are owing from you
“ to that great and good being, who made
“ you and all mankind, and who continu-
“ ally supports both you and all your fel-
“ low-creatures in being, life and happi-
“ ness. and be not discouraged at the
“ having such duties mentioned to you.
“ do not think that there are any hard-
“ ships to be imposed upon you by reli-
“ gion. it is no pain or uneasiness to a good
“ and well-disposed child to be dutiful and
“ obedient to an indulgent parent ; but on
“ the contrarie he finds it to be his highest
“ satisfaction and delight. and may you
“ not, think you, most safely and certainly
“ conclude from hence, that the service of
“ God can never be a burden to you ? for
“ is he not your heavenly *father that has*
“ *made you ?* and for this reason it is that
“ your dear savior has taught you in that
“ prayer of his, which I hope you often
“ repete with seriousness, and with a due
“ con-

“ consideration of God’s knowing your LECT. X.
“ thoughts, to say, *our father, who art in* 
“ *in heaven* ; that by thus addressing your- Filial duty.
“ selves to God under the title or appel-
“ lation of father, you might be encou-
“ raged to think that your obedience to
“ him must needs be not an heavie, tire-
“ some, tedious task, but a pleasant and
“ delightful service ; for no good father
“ ever made his childrens dutie to be a
“ burden to them. and from what you
“ have already heard concerning the divine
“ being, you see why it is that our savior
“ teaches you to say *our father*, and not
“ *my father*, namely, because God is not
“ only your creator, preserver and bene-
“ factor, but the maker likewise and pre-
“ server of all ; and *the lord, who is good*
“ *to all, and whose tender mercies are over all*
“ *his works* ; and this is a sentiment which
“ you should be highly pleased and de-
“ lighted with, as well as with the thought
“ of his being your own benefactor ; other-
“ ways you must come under the charge
“ of having a narrow and selfish spirit.
“ but by always thinking of God as being
“ the kind and gracious father of all ra-
“ tional beings, as well as your own, you
“ will

LECT. X. “ will be continually enlarging by degrees
 “ the benevolence of your own disposition,
 “ and so become more like God; you will
 “ come to look upon all mankind as your
 “ brethren, and by this means be induced
 “ to love them more heartily. and this is
 “ one of the duties which you owe to
 “ God; solemnly and seriously, frequent-
 Prayer. “ ly, privately and publicly to pray to him
 “ as your heavenly father, and the creator
 “ and most merciful preserver of all man-
 “ kind and of all rational beings. and
 “ this you are to do not with any imagi-
 “ nation, that the saying of such and such
 “ words, or the entertaining such and
 “ such thoughts in your minds, will of
 “ itself alone be any way available towards
 “ recommending you to the divine favor
 “ and love. but you are to do it in order
 “ to the having your own minds, (a) your
 “ hearts,

(a) *Quicquid autem horum fit in orando ad nos pertinent non ad Deum. nec enim Deus delinitur audiendo laudes suas, quemadmodum homines, sed nos laudantes illum magis ac magis eliscimus ac suspicimus illius magnitudinem. commemorandis autem & exaggerandis malis nostris non hoc agitur ut in diversum mutatus oratione nostra ex irato fiat propitius, sed ut ipsi,*

“ hearts, your affections impressed with a LECT. X.
 “ more lively sense of God’s presence with
 “ you,

ipsi, dum melius magnitudinem nostræ calamitatis agnoscimus, vehementius expetamus illius misericordiam. itidem cum ea dicuntur, quæ pariunt attentionem, non hoc proficiscitur, ut Deus ante dormitans excitatur, cum illum nihil fugiat eorum quæ latent in cordibus hominum; sed ut nos instantius ac vehementius petamus, quod non promerentur recipere, nisi qui vehementer ambierint. Erasmi Modus Orandi, p. 123, 124. Dieu n’attend pas toujours que les justes le prient: il leur donne souvent des secours qu’ils ne lui demandent pas; & s’il leur ordonne de les lui demander, c’est qu’il veut en être aimé & adoré. Dieu sçait mieux nos besoins que nous-mêmes; & s’il nous commande de le prier, c’est afin de nous obliger de penser à lui, & de le regarder comme celui qui seul est capable de nous combler de biens: c’est afin d’exciter nôtre amour vers lui; & non pas pour apprendre de nous ni nos besoins, ni les motifs qu’il a de nous secourir. il est resolu de nous faire grace à cause de son fils; & s’il veut que nous l’en prions au nom de son fils, c’est afin que nous l’aimions lui & son fils. c’est la foi & l’amour de Dieu qui prient: c’est la disposition de l’esprit & du cœur qui prie. on ne peut prier Dieu sans croire actuellement beaucoup des choses de lui & de nous; sans reconnoître sa propre foiblesse, sans espérer actuellement en Dieu, & sans l’aimer actuellement. mais les actes reveillent & produisent mêmes les habitudes.

LECT. X. “ you, of your intire and absolute depend-
 “ ance upon him for *life and breath and*
 “ *all things*, and of his great and never-
 “ ceasing goodness to you. you are to do
 “ it that you may be the better able to
 “ take the comfort of such reflexions as
 “ these when you come to meet with any
 “ of the afflictions and troubles of life,
 “ and that *in the multitude of your thoughts*
 “ *within you* on account of them these
 “ *consolations* may delight your souls; and
 “ that the thought of God and of his gra-
 “ ciously presiding providence may be so
 “ habitual to you, and so deeply rooted in
 “ your

tudes. c'est donc principalement pour reveiller en nous nôtre foi, nôtre esperance, & nôtre charité, & nous conserver dans l'humilité, que Dieu nous commande de le prier. *Conversations Chretiennes du Malebranche*, Entr. IV. p. 339, 340. and again, *ibid.* p. 341.—la priere est la nourriture de l'ame. c'est par elle qu'elle reçoit de nouvelles forces; c'est par elle qu'elle pense à Dieu, qu'elle se met en sa présence, qu'elle se unit à celui qui est toute sa force. ce'st même par elle qu'elle reçoit de Dieu par JESUS CHRIST la delectation de la grace pour contrebalancer les plaisirs prevenans qu'elle reçoit aussi de Dieu (car il n'y a que Dieu qui agisse en elle) mais qui sont involontaires & rebelles à cause de la desobéissance d'Adam.

“ your minds, as that the peace and com-
 “ fort arising from it may be always at LECT. X.
 “ hand. and you are to do it, that by
 “ having such apprehensions as these of
 “ God always present to your mind, you
 “ may be the more fearful of sinning against
 “ and offending him, and be more shocked
 “ at the thought of complying with any
 “ temptation to do so.” but perhaps you
 “ will be ready to say; “ I am, sir, very
 “ well satisfied in my apprehensions of the
 “ divine goodness. I firmly believe it;
 “ and am, I hope, better settled in my
 “ judgment upon that point by what you
 “ have been saying concerning it. but, pray
 “ sir, what expectations may I build upon it Expecta-
 “ with respect to myself, and my own con- tions.
 “ cerns and interests? this seems, sir, a
 “ point very necessarie to be determined
 “ in order to the regulation of my prayers.
 “ for how can I tell what I ought to make
 “ the matter of my prayer to God, if I
 “ know not what in reason I may expect
 “ from him? In answer to this question,
 “ my good children, I must tell you in the
 “ first place that you are not, because God
 “ is infinitely good, to imagine or to expect
 “ that he will do every thing for you that
 “ you

LECT. X. “ you may happen to desire.” “ why, sir,
 “ does not the psalmist say, that if *I delight*
 “ *myself in the lord*, which surely I do when
 “ I pray to him, if I pray aright, that he
 “ will *give me the desires of mine heart?*”
 “ indeed he does say so. but the meaning
 “ of that is, God is always ready to make
 “ you happier, and that is the *desire* of your
 “ heart ; is it not ? it is only for the sake
 “ of this supreme and ultimate desire that
 “ you wish for this or that particular en-
 “ joyment, supposing that it will contri-
 “ bute to your happiness. but if in fact
 “ it is not likely to do so, then I suppose
 “ you would rather be without it ; and it
 “ would not be agreeable to the main and
 “ leading *desire of your heart*, which is hap-
 “ piness upon the whole, that it should be
 “ bestowed upon you. and yet in the wish-
 “ ing for this or that particular enjoyment
 “ you may be often mistaken in thinking
 “ that it would make you happier by the
 “ possession of it than you now are ; and
 “ therefore it can be no way inconsistent
 “ with the goodness of God to deny it to
 “ you. so the same psalmist, as you re-
 “ member, says, *the lord will give grace*
 “ *and glorie, and no good thing will he with-*
 “ *hold*

“ *hold from them that walk uprightly.* but LECT. X.
 “ then, my dear child, you will, I sup-
 “ pose, be very ready to allow that God
 “ knows what is *good* for you better than
 “ you do yourself, and will be content
 “ therefore to leave it to him to judge for
 “ you. there are however many things
 “ which you may expect and certainly
 “ conclude that God will do for you, if
 “ you be careful to love and please him.
 “ thus in the first place, you may conclude
 “ from his goodness that he will bless your
 “ industrious and honest endeavors in pro-
 “ viding for the things of this life, when
 “ you come to have that care upon you.
 “ not indeed if you mean by this the
 “ growing rich and great in the world;
 “ for that is not always a blessing. it is
 “ not necessarie to your happiness. many
 “ good men there have been in the world
 “ that have been extremely happy though
 “ very poor. but I mean that if you are
 “ not yourself *slothful in business*, but on
 “ the contrarie active and industrious, you
 “ will in the course of his providence be
 “ supplied with *food convenient for you.* and
 “ Agur, you know, preferred this not only
 “ to povertie but even to riches. *give me*
 “ K *neither*

LECT. X. “ *neither povertie nor riches*, was his prayer
 “ to God; and you cannot offer up in
 “ this respect a better for yourself. in
 “ this or that particular design too you
 “ may be disappointed, and yet God’s
 “ blessing attend your industrie upon the
 “ whole in prospering and *establisshing the*
 Disappoint- “ *work of your hands.* even these very dis-
 ments, “ appointments themselves may contribute
 “ to it in the end, by making you more
 “ serious, more patient, more circumspect,
 “ and more indifferent to worldly good.
 “ and if you can be content with a little,
 “ that is altogether as good as having a
 “ great deal. secondly, you may conclude
 “ from God’s goodness, that he will not
 “ suffer you to want any necessarie direc-
 “ tion in the path of virtue; so that if
 “ you are ignorant in this point, the fault
 “ must be altogether your own. God has
 “ put the means of knowlege into your
 “ hands; that knowlege that is necessarie
 “ to your salvation. *the word is nigh unto*
 “ *you*, it is in your heart, and it is in your
 “ bibles, and the more you consult it the
 “ wiser you will grow. and you may de-
 “ pend upon it that God will continually
 “ enlighten your minds more and more in
 “ the

“ the knowlege of his truth, if you do but LECT. X.
 “ diligently apply yourselves to the search
 “ of it. *if thou searchest for her, that is,*
 “ wisdom, *as silver, and seekest for her as*
 “ *for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand*
 “ *the fear of the lord, and find the knowlege*
 “ *of God.* for the lord, it is added, *giveth*
 “ *wisdom.* this is the very reasoning
 “ which I have been pointing out to you.
 “ and I am glad that I can enforce it upon
 “ you by the authoritie of Solomon,
 “ whose, you know, are the words that
 “ have just now been recited. wisdom is
 “ the gift of God, from him it procedeth ;
 “ and you may be sure that he is too good
 “ to denie it to any who sincerely seek
 “ after and desire it. again, thirdly, upon
 “ this head, you may be assured that God
 “ will fortifie you against the power of
 “ temptation so as not to suffer you to be
 “ overcome by it, unless you yourself are
 “ so careless as not to make a proper use of
 “ the gracious aids and influences he af-
 “ fords you. *he will not suffer you, as the*
 “ apostle expresses it, *to be tempted above*
 “ *what you are able, but will with the temp-*
 “ *tation also make a way to escape, that you*
 “ *may be able to bear it.* innocence and

LECT. X. " virtue are necessarie to your happiness.

" and therefore you may certainly con-
" clude that God will never suffer you to
" lose the one, unless through your own
" remissness, or leave it out of your power
" even by your best endeavors in resisting
" the force of temptation to obtain the
" other. and then in the fourth place,
" from the goodness of God you may na-
" turally conclude that he will not destroy
" your being, but that death will only be
" your removal into some other world,
" where you will see and discern that
" goodness much more clearly than now
" you do, and yourself experience much
" more of the effects of it, notwithstand-
" ing all the bright and glorious evidences of
" it that are even now presenting themselves
" to your view. for this life is very short,
" and the more you are convinced of the
" shortness of it, the less likely will it ap-
" pear to you that it should be the only
" period or scene of being allotted for us by
" so good and kind a creator, who can as
" easily continue our being in another
" world as he has preserved it in this.
" but, pray sir, what may I expect from
" the goodness of God in relation to
" others ?

“ others? for I cannot but interest myself LECT. X.
 “ in their happiness as well as mine own. }
 “ why, you may expect in the first place,
 “ that he will continue to govern the whole
 “ world, as well as to direct the particular
 “ events of his providence that relate to
 “ yourself, in righteousness, and with the
 “ highest benigntie and kindness. and
 “ therefore when any public calamities Divine
 “ happen, or some deep and dreadful dis- judgments.
 “ tress befalls whole nations and kingdoms
 “ at once, you may conclude that this is
 “ in mercie intended for the chastisement
 “ of a wicked people, and for the correc-
 “ tion of their depraved manners; and
 “ that if they repent, God will *turn away*
 “ *his anger from them that they perish not.*
 “ you may expect, secondly, that it *shall*
 “ *be well with the righteous*, and that they
 “ shall find happiness and peace, satisfac-
 “ tion and joy in pursuing the paths of
 “ virtue. this, as I have already hinted to
 “ you in your own case, may be very true,
 “ even tho’ they should meet with many
 “ afflictions. numbers there have been,
 “ who, notwithstanding these have spoken
 “ highly of the goodness of God, have
 “ been very fervent in their acknowlege-
 “ ments

LECT. X. “ments and celebrations of it, have been
 “very well satisfied with his dealings to-
 “wards them, and very happy in the en-
 “joyment of themselves. you may like-
 “wise conclude, thirdly, from the good-
 “ness of God, that he will never suffer
 “any of his human creatures to be misera-
 “ble hereafter, except through their own
 “wilfulness and folly; and that he will never
 “oblige any man to be eternally damned by
 “the power of his own decree. you your-
 “self would never do such a cruel thing.
 “you would detest and abhor the thought
 “of it. and you may be sure that God
 “is kinder than you. such then are the
 “inferences which you may draw from
 “God’s goodness, and the expectations
 “that you may ground upon it both in
 “your own case, and in reference to the
 “happiness and good of others.

“But now let me, my dear child, re-
 “mind you, that from the very account
 “which I have been giving you of the
 “nature and design of prayer, you may
 “infer that there are yet other duties
 “owing from you to the great lord and
 “governor of the universe. and it is by
 “the exercise of this that you are to be
 “made

“ made more sensible of, and attentive to LECT. X.
 “ them. I shall think myself, sir, very
 “ happy in having some brief account of
 “ them laid before me. well then, my
 “ dear child, in the first place, you must
 “ undoubtedly be under the highest obli-
 “ gations to love God, and to cherish in
 “ your heart the most fervent gratitude
 “ towards him. your own kind father
 “ upon earth you are thankful to, and
 “ think it your duty to be so, I doubt not,
 “ for the care he is continually taking of
 “ you, and the tenderness he daily ex-
 “ presses for you. and you would, I dare
 “ say, think it very base in you not to love
 “ him better than any man in the world.
 “ but now for the very same reason you ought
 “ to love God better than any being in the
 “ universe; that is, *with all your heart and*
 “ *soul, and might and strength*, because he
 “ surpasses all other beings in goodness and
 “ in goodness to you. but pray, sir,
 “ what is the difference between gratitude
 “ to God, and the loving of him? for I
 “ observe that you mention these as distinct.
 “ why, to love God is to esteem and de-
 “ light in him on account of his goodness
 “ in general, the goodness of his nature,

LECT. X. “ and his benevolence to all his creatures.
“ and gratitude is the loving him on ac-
“ count of his goodness towards ourselves.
“ but secondly, from what has been said
“ concerning the being and attributes of
“ God, you must needs perceive, my good
“ children, that it cannot but be your
“ dutie to resign yourselves wholly and
“ chearfully to his will ; and to the dis-
“ pensations of his providence whatever
“ they are or may be. for as he is not
“ only supremely good, but possessed of all
“ power, and endued with unerring wis-
“ dom, nothing can be more clear and evi-
“ dent than that all he does, all the events
“ of his providence and designs of his uni-
“ versal government are for the highest
“ good of his creatures; so that not to
“ be resigned to his providence, and acqui-
“ escing in the disposals of it, must needs
“ be in the highest degree foolish, pro-
“ phane, and ungenerous. why foolish ?
“ because it is to be dissatisfied with that
“ which is best for ourselves. why pro-
“ phane and impious ? because not to be
“ pleased with the measures that are pur-
“ sued by divine and infinite goodness,
“ must needs implicate and carry in it at best
“ some

“ some defect in our love of that goodness. LECT. X.
 “ and why is it ungenerous? because it is
 “ repining at the dealings of that provi-
 “ dence which in all its dispensations has
 “ in view the common and most extensive
 “ good of the whole intelligent and moral
 “ creation. thirdly, you ought undoubt-
 “ edly to be very fearful of offending God
 “ by breaking any of his commandments.
 “ for to do so must needs be very ungrate-
 “ ful. and if you do in any instance trans-
 “ gress them, you may be very sure that he
 “ is acquainted with your disobedience
 “ and with the ingratitude of your hearts.
 “ and you know that in consequence of
 “ his own infinitely pure and holy nature
 “ he cannot but look upon every thing of
 “ this kind with the greatest abhorrence
 “ and displeasure. but then if you would
 “ discharge aright your dutie towards God,
 “ you must not only be fearful of offend-
 “ ing, but willing to obey him. this surely,
 “ as well as the other, is what gratitude
 “ must needs demand from you. we can-
 “ not be truly grateful to him, unless we
 “ are willing to obey him in every thing
 “ that he has signified to be his will or
 “ law with respect to our conduct and his
 K 5 “ injunc-

LECT. X. “ injunction upon us. and whatever it
 “ be, and however reveled or made known,
 “ you may be assured that it is both for
 “ your own, and for the general good of
 “ all whom such a law or injunction may
 “ any way affect. and to refuse your obe-
 “ dience must needs be the height of info-
 “ lence and prophaneness. not to obey
 “ with all possible chearfulness and alacri-
 “ tie, very inconsistent with those constant
 “ acknowledgements we are making of our
 “ perpetual obligations to the goodness of
 “ that sovereign being who commands it.
 “ again, it is our dutie to imitate God. if you
 “ ask me why? or should you be inclined
 “ to think that this is a dutie too high for
 “ your attainment; let me ask you, are
 “ you not capable of loving your fellow-
 “ creatures? now, to love them is to imi-
 “ tate God, who *is love*; and the more
 “ you love them, the more nearly do you
 “ resemble him, in the high and infinite
 “ perfection of his nature; the transcend-
 “ ent excellencie of his moral character
 “ this you profess to admire, and to look
 “ upon as being in the highest degree ami-
 “ able. now observe; whatever in the con-
 “ duct and character of any of your fellow-
 “ crea-

“ creatures you admire, and that you now LECT. X.
 “ think excellent and agreeable, you are }
 “ desirous and fond of imitating it your-
 “ self as far as you are able. and it is
 “ natural that you should be so. for which
 “ reason, by the way, you ought to be
 “ very careful what it is in this kind that
 “ you do admire. but to procede; if the
 “ representation and reasoning that has
 “ now been insisted upon be just, then
 “ certainly you must be obliged to imitate
 “ God, because you are obliged to love
 “ him. and if you do not desire to be
 “ like him, you may with too much reason
 “ suspect that you are far from loving him
 “ as you ought. and you may well believe
 “ that God cannot take any complacencie
 “ in those beings that are not like him,
 “ and yet are capable of being so; for
 “ they are wilfully defective in that which
 “ is his chief delight; holiness and good-
 “ nels. and not to imitate his perfections
 “ is in effect to despise them. how great
 “ and horrid an affront offered to the glo-
 “ rious majestie of heaven and earth! but
 “ there is still another dutie mentioned in
 “ the holy scriptures as what we are owing
 “ to the divine and sovereign being; and
 “ that

LECT. X. “ that is the glorifying of him. and you
 “ may perhaps be still more surprized at
 “ the mention of this, than at that of re-
 “ sembling him. for how, you may be
 “ ready to ask, can we glorifie God?
 “ how ! why can you not honor God?
 “ does not a *son honor his father* ? now, to
 “ glorifie God is to honor him: and this
 “ you do in the most acceptable manner,
 “ by fulfilling the several duties that we
 “ have just now been speaking of. to love
 “ God, to submit to his will, to obey,
 “ and to imitate him, is most strictly and
 “ truly to honor him. you honor God
 “ likewise by being very desirous that all
 “ men should have honorable and worthy
 “ notions concerning him ; and by doing
 “ the utmost that lies in your power, and
 “ within the sphere of your acquaintance
 “ and influence, towards promoting such
 “ apprehensions of him in the world. in
 “ a word, you honor him by shewing in
 “ the whole course and tenor of your
 “ actions, that you are well pleased with
 “ being his creature, with your intire de-
 “ pendance upon him ; and that you are
 “ the subject of his moral government.
 “ and this is what the apostle means when
 “ he

“ he says, that *whether we eat or drink, or* LECT. X.
“ *whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the*
“ *glorie of God.* by the general course and
“ constant tenor of our actions we are to
“ declare and shew forth to all the world,
“ that we think well and honorably of the
“ great creator of heaven and earth, and
“ believe him to be in his nature and pro-
“ vidence the most worthy object of our
“ highest affection, complacencie, and
“ esteem.” and thus we have, by the blessing of heaven, gone thro’ the first part of our design in this evening exercise, which was to discourse concerning God, his being, his nature, his attributes; his providence, its realitie, properties and extent. the subject which lies next before us is man; his origin, his nature, his connexions, the end of his creation, his happiness, his duty, or the particulars of that obedience of which we have just now been speaking as essentially owing from him to God his maker.


L E C T U R E X I.

LECT. XI.

NEXT in importance to the knowlege of God, is that of ourselves. it is a duty that has been founded high in all antiquitie. and the precept enjoining it was supposed in an especial manner to have come down from heaven. it is a dutie which we owe more immediately to God. for man being the first and principal of his workmanship here upon earth, to contemplate ourselves, to know our own frame, to survey its wonders, to acquaint ourselves with its goodly order and exquisite contrivance, must certainly be such an instance of deference and respect paid to the works of the almightie, which we cannot be negligent of, or omit, without manifest contempt and impietie. to be curious in searching out the nature and œconomie of inferior beings, and to overlook ourselves, the noblest fabric of God here upon earth; what is it but in effect to deprive the supreme being of the honor that is *due to his name* on account of it? for how can we justly celebrate his praises as the creator of
man,

Self-ac-
quaintance.

man, if we know not the nature of man? LECT. XI.
and on the other hand, were we but well acquainted with ourselves, there is no subject whatsoever within the compass of human knowledge, that could give stronger accent to our praises, or more elevate and enliven our songs of devotion. the studie of ourselves likewise is of the highest importance in order to the right discharge of the duties of social life, or those obligations which we lie under to one another. how should we know what these are but by acquainting ourselves with our own frame and make both outward and internal? the better we are acquainted with ourselves, the better of course shall we know our fellow-creatures. and the better we know them, the better shall we know how to behave towards them. this likewise is a dutie of the highest importance with respect to ourselves. we cannot discern wherein our own true happiness lies without understanding our own nature. that which is the happiness of a man must be mine and yours. to know therefore what kind of happiness man in general is made for, must be to understand our own highest good. and it is for want of being familiarly and
duly

LECT. XI. duly acquainted with our own necessities, and of distinguishing between those which are imaginarie and those which are real, those that relate only to the better accommodation of our present being, and those which are essential to the happiness of our natures, that we betray ourselves into endless vanitie, and become subject to perpetual disquietudes and disappointments. did we but know ourselves aright, the world and the things that happen in it could never make so many fatal impressions upon the mind as we are daily perceiving them to do, both with respect to ourselves and others. we should then know what things we might pursue with the greatest prospect of success ; what things were least in our power, and what the most so ; and how to regulate our aims and measures accordingly. now that which naturally presents itself first to our reflection concerning man, according to what has hitherto been so largely insisted upon, is that he is the creature of God. if there be any thing in this world that has derived its being from God, this must needs be equally true of man. for is he conscious to himself of any self-supporting power belonging to him more than
than

than to the meanest reptile? he “feels no LECT. XI.
 “virtue of this kind going out of him.”

he stands in the closest connexion with other dependent beings, and must therefore needs look upon himself as ranking under that denomination too. he finds, he knows, that he cannot continue himself here in being one single moment. nor can he with all his own care, had he nothing else to depend upon, provide himself with any one necessarie article of life. he may procure seed to sow, and he may prepare the earth for its reception, and throw it in and cherish it; but what will all this effect without refreshing dews and rains, the ripening sun and vegetative power of the earth? over all which man has no more command than a worm. and even after he has eaten the bread that God has provided for him, does he not know that the digestion of it and distribution of its nourishing juices through the several parts of the body, and the circulation of its several different qualities into the corresponding receptacles, is a thing totally independent upon himself, and over which he has no power or command? “this, my good children, is what

“the scriptures mean in saying that *man*
 “*liveth*

LECT. XI. *“ liveth not by bread alone, but by every word
 “ that procedeth out of the mouth of God.*

*“ that is ; it is not man’s care alone in
 “ providing any of the conveniencies or
 “ accommodations of life for himself, but
 “ the divine blessing upon his industrie ;
 “ not the bread which he eats by any in-
 “ dependent power or virtue of its own,
 “ but the continued agencie of a divine
 “ providence in the support and preserva-
 “ tion of its qualities, that is the true
 “ source and origin of life to man.”* can
 we command the circulation of our own
 blood ? and yet how regularly does it flow ?
 this must needs be owing to some presiding
 and directing mind. and as we are con-
 scious that it is not our own, it must needs
 be the divine, eternal mind ; that sovereign
 deitie, by whom we were not only at first
 created, but are continually upheld and
 supported in our existence. *“ you often
 “ talk, my good children, of such a one’s
 “ relations, and of your own relations.
 “ and you know in general what the term
 “ imports. but it will be happy for you
 “ to extend your views both with respect
 “ to yourselves and to mankind in general
 “ as to this particular, according to what
 “ we*

Relations.

“ we have just now been saying. you see LECT. XI.
“ what an important *relation* there is sub-
“ sisting between you and the sovereign,
“ eternal deitie. he is your creator, your
“ preserver, your benefactor, your friend.
“ and as it is he only that has made you
“ happie hitherto, so it is he only that can
“ accomplish all your wishes. this there-
“ fore must needs be the most important of
“ all your *connexions*; and one that you can-
“ not be too frequently or seriously mind-
“ ful of. and from this consideration, my
“ good children, you will learn to be hum-
“ ble.” man is a very noble creature. Man.
he has power, and he has reason. he has wis-
dom, skill and dexteritie. a fancy and ima-
gination that can take prodigious flights,
expatiate at large in the region of ideas;
and form to itself a thousand pleasing and
airie conceits. by means of these several
faculties he can wonderfully entertain both
himself and others, hit upon numerous in-
ventions that may be of the greatest utilitie
both in the prosecution of his own affairs
and with respect to the concerns and inter-
ests of others, cultivate the knowlege of
many noble sciences, acquire an high de-
gree of facilitie in many curious and pro-
fitable

LECT. XI. fitable arts. and on all these accounts
many of our species are apt to be not a little proud and arrogant, and to think highly, vainly and insolently of themselves, and very contemptibly of others, whom they imagine to be in any of these particulars their inferiors. “ but, do you think, my
“ good children, that there is in any of
“ these endowments a sufficient reason for
“ being proud? no, sir, I think from
“ what you have been saying, it plainly
“ appears that there is not, because, how
“ great and eminent soever may be my endowments and qualifications, I have
“ received them all from God, and depend
“ intirely and every moment upon him for
“ the continuance and enjoyment of them.
“ so that I cannot but apprehend that
“ were my powers and faculties, and the
“ several excellencies of my being a thousand times greater than they really are,
“ I should still have no more reason to be
“ proud than I have at present; because
“ it would be equally true in relation to
“ these more distinguishing and superior
“ excellencies of nature, that I had received them from God, and was intirely
“ dependent upon him for the preservation
“ and

“ and continued possession of them. you LECT. XI.
“ imagine then, I suppose, that there is }
“ no such being as a proud angel in hea-
“ ven? I cannot but conclude so. must
“ not pride then be to the last degree un-
“ natural and insufferable in man? indeed,
“ sir, I cannot but think it must. it is a
“ matter of great consequence, my good
“ children, in regard to your moral tem-
“ per, to connect these things in some
“ such manner as I have now been inti-
“ mating, because I would by no means
“ wish you to entertain a mean and grove-
“ ling opinion of your own natures; but
“ on the contrarie to think honorably of
“ yourselves in this respect. because by
“ this means you are more likely to think
“ honorably of your maker, to be excited
“ to noble aims and pursuits, and to look
“ upon vice and wickedness as what would
“ be a shame and disgrace to you; and to
“ abhor every thing of this kind as wholly
“ repugnant to the nature and constitution
“ of your own minds. but then it is at
“ the same time a matter of the greatest
“ importance to you; to your usefulness,
“ to your character in the world, to your
“ own ease, quietness and self-satisfaction,
“ with

LECT. XI. “ with respect to the improvement of your
 “ mind in virtue, and to your acceptableness in the sight of God; that you be of
 “ an humble temper and disposition. and
 “ you see how easy a matter it is to reconcile these two things; this humilitie of
 Humilitie. “ temper with an honorable opinion of
 “ your own natures, only by considering
 “ that you *have* nothing but what you have
 “ *received*, and that you are nothing with
 “ respect to the prerogatives of your being,
 “ but what God has made you to be. you
 “ see, in short, that an arch-angel has no
 “ more reason to be proud than a worm,
 “ because the former is as truly the creature of God and dependent upon him
 “ for being as the latter. and this naturally suggests another particular in relation to the nature and constitution of
 “ man, which amidst the high prerogatives
 “ and honors of your intellectual and moral
 “ frame may justly serve to keep you humble. and you will, I hope, be gladly reminded of it. What I mean is this;
 “ that, though by the intellectual and
 “ moral powers belonging to your natures,
 “ you are indeed allied even to the very
 “ angels of heaven, they being like you,
 “ reason-

“ reasonable creatures and moral agents, LECT. XI.
 “ only of a prodigiously higher class and
 “ order in this kind than man; yet by
 “ means of another part of your formation
 “ you are made to have something in com-
 “ mon likewise with the mere animals of
 “ the earth. you are like them dependent
 “ upon the fruits of the earth for suste-
 “ nance. you have a body like them,
 “ which stands in need of continual re-
 “ freshment and supply, and you are liable
 “ like them to bodily fatigue, and under
 “ the necessitie of bodily labor. and to
 “ your bodie and theirs there are many of
 “ the same materials belonging. when-
 “ ever therefore you are disposed to enter-
 “ tain any proud and arrogant conceit of
 “ yourself on account of your mental en-
 “ dowments, or the capacities and powers
 “ of your soul, or of the beautie of your
 “ outward form, which, whatever it be,
 “ however exquisite and captivating, you
 “ are wholly indebted to God for it; to
 “ God, who made you out of the dust of
 “ the earth, and framed the intire fabric
 “ of your bodie; you may very naturally
 “ check, restrain and bear down such fond
 “ and airy conceits, by reflecting upon
 “ this

LECT. XI. “ this affinitie, that there is, great and
 “ exalted as you are on other accounts in
 “ rank and dignitie of nature, between
 “ you and the brute creation.” this then
 is the first truth that naturally presents it-
 self to our reflection concerning man, that
 whatever be his endowments, whether as a
 rational and moral being, or as an inhabi-
 tant of this inferior world, he is wholly
 the dependant and the creature of God.
 “ you perceive, my good children, that in
 “ speaking of man as a rational creature,
 “ we have described him as a being that is
 “ capable of forming a great many designs,
 “ and of hiting upon various apt and well-
 “ adjusted means for the execution of
 “ them, of acquiring the knowlege of a
 “ great varietie of objects, of perceiving
 “ the differences and relations of things
 “ around him, and of discovering a great
 “ number of truths in reference to them.
 “ but are there not, think you, some me-
 “ thods of employing this general facultie
 “ much more excellent and important than
 “ others ; some truths which by means of
 “ it are to be discovered that are of much
 “ greater consequence with relation to his
 “ happinefs than others ? yes, sir, I cannot
 “ but

“ but apprehend that there must be a very LECT. XI.
 “ great difference in this respect. what
 “ then do you suppose to be that kind of
 “ knowlege, or those particular discoveries
 “ about which the reason of man was prin-
 “ cipally designed to be employed, and to
 “ which he may most honorably applie it?
 “ I apprehend, sir, that it must be the disco-
 “ verie and the knowlege of God, for which
 “ I find by what we have been so lately con-
 “ sidering upon that head, man is by the
 “ reasoning powers of his mind very natu-
 “ rally qualified. and as he is so, I must
 “ needs look upon this to be the highest
 “ and noblest exercise and object of his
 “ reason, and in all respects the most inte-
 “ resting and important. you suppose it
 “ then to be the distinguishing honor of
 “ man as a reasonable creature, that by
 “ being so he is fited for the knowlege of
 “ God (a). but did we not sometimes in
 “ some

(a) Q. 8. *How must God's creation be sancti-
 fied? When we look on or think of the incom-
 prehensible glory of the sun, its wonderful
 greatness, motion, light and quickening heat,
 of the multitude and magnitude of the glorious
 stars, of the vast heavenly regions, the incom-
 prehensible, invisible spirits or powers, that*
L
actuate

LECT. XI. “ some of our former conferences speak of
 “ man, not only as being a rational crea-
 “ ture, but likewise as a being endued
 “ with moral powers, and as being consti-
 “ tuted a moral agent; pray what is it
 “ that

actuate and rule them all; when we come down-ward and think of the air and its inhabitants, and of this earth, a vast body to us, but as one inch or point in the whole creation; of the many nations, animals, plants of wonderful varietie, the terrible depths of the ocean and its numerous inhabitants, &c. all these must be to us but as the glass, which sheweth somewhat of the face of God, or as the letters of this great book, of which God is the sense; or as the actions of a living body, by which the invisible soul is known. and as we study arts for our corporal use, we must study the whole world, even the works of God, to this purposed use, that we may see, love, reverence and admire God in all: and this is the only true philosophy, astronomy, cosmography, &c. Q. 9. *What is the sin which is contrary to this?* Prophaneness; that is, using God’s name as a common thing: and in this instance, to study philosophy, astronomy, or any science, or any creature whatsoever, only to know the thing itself, to delight our mind with the creature-knowlege, and to be able to talk as knowing men, or the better to serve our worldly ends, and not to know and glorifie God, is to prophane the works of God. and alas then how common is prophaneness in the world! Baxter’s *Catechizing of Families*, c. xxv. p. 184, 185.

“ that you suppose to be more distinctly LECT. XI.
 “ meant by this kind of language? I }
 “ think, sir, I can separate in my imagi-
 “ nation the idea of knowing God from
 “ that of loving him, and worshiping,
 “ obeying and resembling him. and here,
 “ sir, I apprehend, lies the difference be-
 “ tween a rational and a moral creature.
 “ man as a rational creature is capable of
 “ knowing God; but it is only as a mo-
 “ rally constituted being that he is capable
 “ of loving and adoring him, and of sub-
 “ mitting himself in the spirit of voluntarie
 “ obedience to his laws. you have made
 “ a very just and natural distinction. for
 “ the brute creatures can discern by their
 “ senses the outward objects of nature.
 “ but they can make no inferences, they
 “ can draw no conclusions from these ob-
 “ jects with reference to the existence of a
 “ creating mind as you can do; and are
 “ therefore not rational creatures as man
 “ is. in like manner we may suppose it to
 “ have been possible, that man might, as a
 “ reasonable creature, have had the power
 “ of discovering and knowing his maker,
 “ or of believing in God; but yet for
 “ want of moral powers, not have been Moral pow-
ers.

LECT. XI. “capable of loving him, or paying any act
“ of adoration or obedience to him. our
“ moral capacity or constitution then is
“ an advance in the excellencie and prerogatives of our nature, and what renders
“ man a vastly nobler and more important
“ being, than if he had been merely rational. but for what reasons, and upon
“ what grounds do you suppose man to be
“ not only a rational but likewise a morally reflecting being? I think, sir, I
“ have been led very easily, very clearly
“ and very certainly to deduce this truth
“ from what I remember you to have already insisted upon in proving the being
“ of a God, from the constitution and frame of man, and by those home-ap-peals which you have sometimes made to
“ mine own heart, and of which I could not
“ but feel the force. upon these appeals I
“ could not but find that there was a
“ charm and a loveliness in goodness and
“ in doing good, that was in the highest
“ degree attractive of my esteem and veneration, and that could not but confer the
“ highest honor upon those to whom such
“ a character was belonging. now from
“ hence I cannot but infer that such
“ persons

“ persons must be the proper objects of Lect. XI.
 “ my love and approbation, on account of
 “ their being possessed of so amiable a qua-
 “ litie. and from hence again, that God
 “ must needs be the just and most worthy
 “ object of my highest love, because he is a
 “ being of the highest goodness. I think
 “ likewise that I cannot but be bound to
 “ imitate in my own conduct that which
 “ I thus inwardly and naturally approve in
 “ another; and that therefore by this prin-
 “ ciple of *moral approbation* belonging to
 “ my frame, I must have been made and
 “ constituted under an obligation to do
 “ good myself, and to cultivate the princi-
 “ ple of kindness and benevolence in mine
 “ own heart, as well as to love goodness in
 “ another. and could you not think of
 “ urging something farther still by which
 “ to shew that you yourself, and the rest of
 “ mankind are beings made for the love
 “ and practice of moral virtue? yes, sir,
 “ I am apt to flatter myself that I can.
 “ will you let me know how you would
 “ procede? I perceive, sir, that besides
 “ my being inclined by nature to approve
 “ of and to admire benevolence and doing
 “ good, I have something within me that
 “ prompts

LECT. XI. “ prompts me to be doing good myself,
 “ which leads me to take an instant plea-
 “ sure in performing an act of kindness to
 “ my neighbor, or in relieving his wants.
 “ I am shocked immediately, and without
 “ any farther reflection, and ere I can have
 “ time to recur in my thoughts to that
 “ *moral sense* (a) which we have just now
 “ been

(a) “ There is ingrafted in the mind of man
 “ an intellectual *sense*, a discernment of what is
 “ good and evil ; as in the *eye* a sensible one of
 “ white and black ; in the *palate* a taste of
 “ bitter and sweet ; in the *ear* a power to dis-
 “ criminate harmonies and discords ; in *all* a
 “ sense of pleasure and pain. *what* is harmo-
 “ nious, equal, congruous, and consequently
 “ *pleasing* and agreeable unto pratique reason,
 “ and accordingly approved by it, which it
 “ honours with a *dictate*, that it ought to be
 “ pursued or effected, that is called *morally*
 “ good ; and *what* is disharmonious, unequal
 “ and incongruous, and consequently *painful*
 “ and disagreeable, and accordingly disallow-
 “ ed, of which the understanding *dictates* that
 “ it ought to be *avoided*, that is *morally* evil.
 “ to be *morally* good or evil, is to be good or
 “ evil in point of *manners* ; good and evil in
 “ manners are the *objects* of the *pratique* under-
 “ standing ; there are things agreeable or dis-
 “ agreeable to the mind and pratique under-
 “ standing, as well as to “ other” senses.
 “ there are things good and things evil to this
 “ high

“ been speaking of, at the sight of miserie, LECT. XI.
 “ and run to its relief. now, as I am en-
 “ dued with these benevolent and compas-
 “ sionate principles, instigating and prompt-
 “ ing me to correspondent actions, and at
 “ the same time have *another* principle in
 “ my frame that disposes me to approve of
 “ them, I cannot I think but from hence
 “ infer that the very reason of my being
 “ endued with these principles, was, that
 “ I should cultivate and exert them, and
 “ that I should look upon it as my duty to
 “ do so. not to do it would be acting
 “ contrarie to the will of my maker disco-
 “ vered in my frame, and therefore im-

“ high and racy sense, as well as to inferior
 “ ones.” *Burthogge's Apology*, p. 398—400.
 —Hyl.—“ were that quicker *sense* revived in
 “ us whereby we discern moral good and evil,
 “ adultery, drunkenness, murther, fraud, ex-
 “ tortion, perfidiousness, and the like; all
 “ these would have infinitely a worse scent to
 “ our souls, than this which you say is so stink-
 “ ingly evil can have to our noses.” *More's*
Divine Dialogues, Vol. I. p. 285. “ there is
 “ a *sense* in a man, if it were awakened, to
 “ which these *moral incongruities* are as harsh
 “ and displeasing, as any incongruous object,
 “ be it never so nauseous, is to the outward
 “ senses.” *Ibid.* p. 286, 287.

LECT. XI.

“ piety. besides, I find myself so connected with mankind, and all mankind with one another, that it is only by mutual offices of love and friendship that society or the body of mankind in general originally designed for happiness by the creating deity, can in peace and comfort subsist. and by the universal exchange of such offices all would become extremely happy and be well pleased with themselves and with their condition here. and this, methinks, is another consideration, that jointly with what I have already ventured to mention, strongly intimates what we were made for, and points out the end of our being, that which should be our aim in life; the proper business and the natural duties of it. and the evidence, I think, arises thus: I am so made and constituted as to approve good actions. I am naturally prompted to the doing of them. the exercise and practice of goodness is necessary to the well-being of society. it effectually secures it. benevolence therefore, love or goodness, must needs be the law of our maker, and the naturally incumbent duty of our situation here.

“ here. but among other things, which LECT. XI.
 “ you find to be affirmed concerning
 “ man, you have no doubt heard him
 “ spoken of as being a social creature ;
 “ what is the idea or notion that in your
 “ own mind you affix to that term or cha-
 “ racter given of him ? it seems, sir, in a
 “ great measure to coincide or to express
 “ the same sense with that character of
 “ him already discussed, or the moral prin-
 “ ciples belonging to his frame and nature.
 “ he is a social creature, because he is by
 “ his nature fitted for and obliged to social
 “ as well as religious duties ; the love of
 “ man as well as the love of God ; doing
 “ good himself, as well as admiring good-
 “ ness in another ; and exerting himself in
 “ behalf of his fellow-creatures, as well as
 “ praying for them to God. besides, he
 “ is a social being on this account, that
 “ he is made to take pleasure and satis-
 “ faction in the company of others, and in
 “ discourse and conversation with them.
 “ but I observe you speak of benevolence
 “ only and love, as being the duties of
 “ man considered strictly as a moral agent,
 “ and by way of distinction from his reli-
 “ gious character and relation. are there

LECT. XI. “ no other duties incumbent upon you as
 “ a moral agent, or as a subject of God’s
 “ moral government, even according to
 “ this more limited idea of it? do you not
 “ think that man is bound likewise to be
 “ temperate and just, and to be true to his
 “ word and promises, and to the trust re-
 “ posed in him? o sir, I am fully con-
 “ vinced that he is so. but then I appre-
 “ hend that all these will follow of course
 “ from that of love, or are comprehended
 “ in it. so that by proving that to be his
 “ dutie, I do by necessary consequence
 “ prove these likewise to be incumbent
 “ upon him. why, my dear child, this
 “ seems to be a very comprehensive and
 “ compendious method indeed of ascer-
 “ taining the several duties of moralitie
 “ which you have hit upon. but pray how
 “ will you make it good? indeed, sir, I think
 “ nothing can be plainer than that if a man
 “ be obliged to do all the good he can in
 “ the world, he must necessarily be obliged
 “ to preserve himself in the best capacitie
 “ for exerting the powers and abilities be-
 “ longing to him in such a view; and this
 “ can only be by being *temperate in all*
 “ *things*. if I am obliged to contribute
 “ all

“ all I can to the welfare and happiness of LECT. XI.
“ another, I must needs be under an equal
“ obligation at least not to do him any
“ wrong; and that is to be just. if I am
“ to aim at promoting the peace and wel-
“ fare of mankind, I must needs be bound
“ to pursue this aim by methods that are
“ most likely to answer such an end, and to
“ make me in fact useful to others. and
“ this seems to me, sir, to be the same
“ with prudence. and as by breaking my
“ word, violating my promise, or betray-
“ ing my trust, I manifestly do an injurie;
“ I can neither be just nor benevolent, if
“ I allow myself in any such practices.
“ but are there not some of your fellow-
“ creatures whose welfare you are more
“ obliged to consult than that of others?
“ I imagine, sir, that there are. and who
“ are they? my benefactors. and why so?
“ because gratitude does in this case con-
“ cur with the general law of benevolence
“ to excite and instigate my kind and lov-
“ ing affection towards them; and the cir-
“ culation of friendly offices is greatly pro-
“ moted and encouraged by the return of
“ one good action for another. and are
“ there no others to whom you are obliged

LECT. XI. “ in a peculiar manner to be kind and
 “ friendly? yes, fir; those of my own
 “ kindred and family. and why? because,
 “ generally speaking, these are our greatest
 “ benefactors; and providence has placed
 “ me in a cloſer and more intimate con-
 “ nexion with them, which is a plain ſig-
 “ nification given to me that I am to con-
 “ ſult their happineſs in the firſt place.”
 and the general intereſt of ſocietie would
 greatly ſuffer, if thoſe to whom we
 are moſt nearly and cloſely allied had
 not the chief and principal ſhare in our
 kind and generous affections in pre-
 ference to any equal number of other
 individuals. and it would be worſe for
 all in general, if theſe were not by each
 one in particular more eſpecially to be
 regarded in our acts of kindneſs and
 love. “ but I ſuppoſe you may ſometimes
 “ likewise have heard it ſaid of man that
 Free being. “ he is a free being. o! yes, fir, very
 “ often. and what do you ſuppoſe to be
 “ meant by that expreſſion? I imagine,
 “ fir, it is intended to denote that he is a
 “ voluntary and deſigning agent, capable
 “ of acting from his own choice, and not
 “ by constraint merely; with a meaning
 “ and

“ and an aim, and not blindly and by rote LECT. XI.
 “ only, or by the guidance and direction }
 “ of another solely, like a machine; and
 “ that he has a power of chusing or re-
 “ fusing, as things appear to him. he is
 “ likewise I suppose called a free being,
 “ because of the right that he has to
 “ govern his own actions, and not be the
 “ slave of any of his fellow-creatures; to
 “ enjoy his own propertie without mo-
 “ lestation, and to exercise his own reason
 “ and judgment in matters of religion
 “ without controule.” (a) so then it ap-
 “ pears

(a) It is a man's *self-governing* reason and will which causeth him to obey another: nor can a child perform any act of proper obedience differing from a brute's, unless by a self-governing act. but parents government is the next to self-government, and the government of husbands, princes, and masters, which are by contract, is next to that. every subject therefore being first a subject of God, and next a self-governor, is to obey as a reasonable creature, and to understand what is his duty, and what not; and because all is our duty which God commandeth, but not all that man commandeth, God's power being absolute, and all mens limited, therefore we have nothing to do with the laws of God but to know them, and *love them*, and *obey them*. But as to man's commands, we must know also that they are not
con-

LECT. XI. { appears that man is by his nature a derived,
dependant, rational being, made for the know-

contrary to God's laws, and that they belong to the office of the commander. If a parent or prince command you to blaspheme God, or worship idols, or deny Christ, or renounce heaven, or not to pray, &c. you must obey God by disobeying him. and if a king command you not to obey your parents, or will chuse for you your wife, your diet, your physick, the words you shall say to God in your secret prayers, &c. these are things which belong not to his office, no more than to a captain's to become judge of the Common Pleas. Baxter's *Catechizing of Families*, c. xxxviii. p. 292, 293. *Wo unto the world because of offences!* for what an abominable and horrible sin is it for a man to give occasion to others of falling into [this] sinful fear, and thereby to hinder their conversion? but yet this is not sufficient to excuse those, who fear man more than the living God. would to God the magistrates might here open their eyes to see the *sad effects* of their over-forwardness in determining and regulating divine matters, by which they very much obstruct the edification of others, and pinch it within such narrow bounds, by tying it up to their manner and form, though no such limitations are to be found in the word of God, and bind the consciences of men, where God has not bound them, and take upon them the judgment which God has reserved to himself! true it is, that by this means they make themselves to be feared.

knowledge of God, and a moral agent, constituted the subject of God's moral government, fitted and designed for the exercise both of religious and of social duties, and for the pleasures arising hence, endued with a libertie of directing his own actions and of forming a judgment for himself in all matters of inquirie and speculation, and for the present actuating or animating a bodie. such his rank and nature. of his actual condition and character here on earth, and of his hopes and expectations, in our next.

feared by men, and are an occasion of turning aside many that were in a fair way to repentance, to dissimulation and hypocrisie. but they will once to their great sorrow be made sensible who they be that are concerned in that of our lord; *wo unto them that shall offend one of these little ones.* See a striking treatise, intituled *Nicodemus*, by *Aug. Herman. Franck.* p. 26, 27.


LECTURE XII.

LECT. XII.

WE have already, and upon the last occasion of this kind, treated of the nature of man, and considered him according to the several properties and characteristics of it as he is a derived, dependant, rational being, made for the knowlege of God, and as a moral agent constituted the subject of God's moral government, fitted for the exercise both of religious and social duties, as likewise for the enjoyment of religious, moral, and social pleasures; endued with a libertie of directing his own views and actions, and of forming his own judgment in all matters of inquirie and investigation, and for the present connected with and animating a body. we are now next to treat of his actual condition and character here on earth, and of his hopes and expectations respecting futuritie. many hopes and expectations in relation to the "life that now is," we have entertained and cherished in our minds after a very sanguine manner; have built much upon them, and formed to ourselves an imaginarie scene

Hope

scene of most exquisite satisfaction and delight to be enjoyed, when we should come to be in possession of the object of these hopes. but alas we have found them disappointed! either we have never attained the desired good, or if so, we have found it to be only a fancied one: nay, that we have by means of it been betrayed into much vexation and mischief. such in many instances at least has been the case with respect to the hopes and expectations that we have hitherto entertained, and which one way or another we “have seen an end of.” and such may be the case with respect to a thousand more of the like kind Differing
kinds of. that we may be now entertaining and cherishing in our breasts, or may hereafter indulge. and yet is not this owing so much to the uncertaintie of our present situation or the precarious issue of human affairs as to the irregularitie and vanitie of our own affections in fixing upon those objects which we make to be the matter of our hope and eager expectation. were we but in this respect a little wiser, we might hope even in relation to the matters of this present life with much greater probability, and with no small success. thus the husbandman

LECT. XII. bandman plows and sows, not indeed with the certainty or absolute assurance of a crop, but yet with the rational expectation of it. and for the most part throughout all the different regions of the world he finds his expectations gratified and answered. and thus has it been for a long succession of years, and in the general course and order of this world's affairs. though the gratification may at some seasons perhaps have been a little delayed, and some circumstances of a discouraging nature, and that seemed to bear a contrary aspect, may have intervened. and in any other rational and honest pursuit industriously applied to, we may in like manner entertain the hope of having our labor recompensed with the desired success. thus we find in general that those who undertake the care of a family with the hope of providing for it, and exert themselves in a proper manner for that purpose, rarely fail of meeting with that success, which if they be moderate and regular in their views, may abundantly content and satisfy them. there are then with respect to the things of the present life, hopes or expectations of two different kinds. such as are vain, romantic, visionary and fruit-

fruitless, and those other that being found-LECT. XII.
 ed upon probable grounds and well confi-
 dered reasons, and upon the natural appear-
 ances, order and state of things, are gene-
 rally accomplished. and it is these latter,
 I presume, that will be found to be the true
 emblem or model of those expectations
 which we are all with so much satisfaction
 and joy entertaining in relation to a future
 existence, in which we shall be far more
 happy, infinitely more exalted in dignitie
 and blessedness, than any thing that by any
 means we can attain to here can enable us
 to conceive of; and that this hope is of the
 solid and rational kind, not chimerical and
 visionarie. and if with respect to so great
 a varietie of other things we may hope with
 reason and success, why not in this? “ St.
 “ James, as perhaps, my good children, you
 “ may remember, instances in that very
 “ case of the husbandman, which we have
 “ just now been specifying, to the very
 “ same purpose, and as being the natural
 “ emblem of human hope and expectation
 “ with respect to a future state. *be patient,*
 “ he says, *therefore brethren.* and it is a
 “ passage, which as you grow up you may
 “ have frequent occasion of meditating
 “ upon,

LECT. XII. “ upon, and may find great comfort and
 { “ satisfaction to arise from the revolving of
 “ it in your thoughts. *be patient therefore*
 “ *brethren unto the coming of the lord. behold*
 “ *the husbandman waiteth for the precious*
 “ *fruit of the earth, and hath long patience*
 “ *for it, until he receive the early and latter*
 “ *rain. be ye also patient; stablish your*
 “ *hearts. for the coming of the lord draweth*
 “ *nigh.*” thus it is that he speaks concern-

ing our hope of blessedness hereafter, as being altogether as rationally founded as that which is entertained by the honest, industrious and skilful husbandman of a plentiful crop. but before we enter more directly upon our proposed illustration of this particular, we are to consider, according to the method that has been intimated, of the present actual condition of mankind. and we shall briefly touch under this head, upon his external, his religious, and his moral condition or state. as to the first of these, it has often been observed that those of the

Infant state, human species come into the world in a much more infirm and helpless state than is the case with respect to many of the mere animal class; so that for a considerable time after our birth we are wholly unable

either to provide for ourselves, or to be of LECT. XII. any service to others. and yet upon the whole it is very evident that the infant condition of man is so far from being worse than the situation and state of the mere animal tribe when newly entered upon their lower state of being, that it is in all respects incomparably more eligible. what may seem to be defective in the helpless condition of the infant, is abundantly made up by the tenderness, reason and wisdom of the parent. so that helpless as we then are in ourselves, there is in the gracious order of a divine and heavenly providence, an ample provision made for our being nourished and brought up: and by that intire dependance which we have upon our parents in this our infant-season of life, and that care and tenderness, which during the period of it, if not perfect monsters indeed, (a) they do

(a) Nothing can more strongly or beautifully point out the realitie and force of this principle than the application made of it by the supreme being in the language of his prophet, in order to illustrate the infinite compassion and mercifulness of his own eternal nature. *Isaiab* xlix. 15. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion of the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

LECT. XII. fail to exercise towards us, the bond of mutual love, of gratitude and social affection, is rendered much more firm and solid for the future. and thus the most valuable purposes of a social kind are, by this particular dispensation or œconomy of providence, accomplished. a foundation is laid for a long and most lasting friendship between the parents themselves and their offspring in after-life, and for the delightful returns of gratitude on the part of the children, when parents in their turn come to stand in need of the filial assistance. and the social affections thus strengthened in this one particular instance, are by this means naturally improved into the more extended, the universal habit of goodness, and fitted for exerting themselves after a more operative and effectual manner in other connexions, and in every varying scene of human life.

“ you, my children, are to remember as
 “ you grow up, what prodigiously strong
 “ and forcible obligations you lie under to
 “ your parents on account of that perpetual, unwearied care and tenderness
 “ which they have shewn towards you in
 “ your infant state, and to which alone,
 “ under the divine blessing, you are indebted

Parental
affection,

“ for having got beyond it. had it not LECT. XII.
“ been for this you must have perished in
“ your infancie, and never have enjoyed
“ the *light of life*, or had the pleasure of
“ finding yourselves gradually advancing
“ towards manhood, and of being qualified
“ by degrees for manly relishes, and for
“ engaging in such manly occupations as
“ are belonging to the present scene of
“ things. often think, my dear children,
“ through how many anxious days and
“ months your parents denied themselves
“ of almost every comfort and enjoyment,
“ submitted to almost perpetual confine-
“ ment, toil, weariness, fatigue, hazard,
“ dangers, pains and sorrows for your
“ sakes. and all this, though you could
“ never have done them any kindness be-
“ forehand, and when they were altogether
“ uncertain whether you would ever live
“ to repay these *labors of love*, or whether
“ if you did live to have the opportunitie
“ of doing so, you would have the inclina-
“ tion. all this they did for you, though
“ not knowing but possibly you might,
“ notwithstanding all their own best ende-
“ vors to prevent it, be through your base
“ and wicked temper their future plague
“ and

LECT. XII. " and burden. I hope, however, that this
 " will not be the case with respect to any
 Filial " of you; and that you will so reflect upon
 " what I have been saying concerning the
 " tenderneſs of your parents towards you
 " in your infant ſtate, as never to think
 " any thing too much to be done for them
 " in grateful return; that you will wil-
 " lingly obey all their commands; that
 " you will chearfully endure any burden
 " yourſelves for the ſake of lightening
 " theirs; that you will reverence and love
 " them, and have all poſſible tenderneſs
 " for their intereſt and welfare, if ever
 " they ſhould come to want your aſſiſtance.
 " all this is due from you. and how ſadly
 " unnatural and perverſe will be your diſ-
 " poſition, if inſtead of this grateful re-
 " turn you ſhould ſlight and deſpiſe your
 " parents, put them to all manner of in-
 " convenience and trouble, and fill their
 Duty. " hearts with inexpressible pain and ſorrow
 " by your imprudent, or by your extrava-
 " gant and untoward conduct! *the eye that*
 " *mocketh at his father, and deſpiſeth to obey*
 " *his mother; the ravens of the valley ſhall*
 " *pluck it out, and the young eagles ſhall eat it.*
 " is not this very terrible? but you may
 " be

“ be ready to think that there have been LECT. XII.
“ many undutiful children, whose eyes }
“ have never been *plucked out* by a raven,
“ or *eaten* by an eagle. and that is very
“ true. but let me tell you that Solo-
“ mon’s intention in this manner of speak-
“ ing was not to intimate that this very
“ thing itself would exactly and literally
“ happen to disobedient and undutiful
“ children, but by these sensible ideas to
“ strengthen your apprehension of some-
“ thing yet more terrible that must befall
“ you, if this should be your temper and
“ disposition. what a shocking terrible
“ thing does it appear to you for any to
“ have their eyes *plucked out* by one animal
“ and *eaten* up by another. now, says
“ Solomon to you, children, let me inform
“ you, and be sure to remember it, that
“ either that, or something which you will
“ find to be still more shocking and terrible,
“ must needs be your lot, if you behave
“ with contempt, ingratitude and disobe-
“ dience towards your parents. this is an
“ unnatural, wicked, and dreadfully dege-
“ nerate temper. it must therefore be
“ highly displeasing to God, and bring
“ upon you his indignation and wrath;
M “ and

LECT. XII. “ and if persisted in, cannot but terminate
 { “ in the most tremendous woe.” but as
 our infant state is thus helpless and infirm,
 the proper improvement of which, and the
 wise design of providence in it, I have now
 been endeavoring briefly to point out, so
 likewise in our future life on earth we are
 exposed to a great varietie of calamities and
 sorrows. “ there is a time to laugh,” it is
 true. but we all know that there is like-
 wise “ a time to weep.” we form projects.
 but as we have seen, unless it be with great
 caution, wisdom and foresight, we are liable
 to no small disappointment in the event and
 issue of them. and sometimes, even though
 ever so prudently planned, vexation and
 disappointment does nevertheless attend
 them. many evils are we thus liable to
 suffer in consequence of our own impru-
 dence, or else of our necessarie and una-
 voidable defect in wisdom. and many more
 are we exposed to in consequence of the
 follie or injustice of others. pain, sickness
 and distemper of body attend us in one de-
 gree or another throughout the whole of
 life. or if we ourselves be well, “ our
 “ friend Lazarus,” it may be, “ is sick.”
 those, whose company, health, prosperitie
 and

and happiness is our own greatest joy, are LECT. XII.
laboring perhaps under many pains and infirmities of body, or if not under these, under worldly losses and disappointments of various kinds. in our own affairs of this nature we are liable, not only in many instances to the frustration of our hopes, but even to very urgent, pressing difficulties and embarrassments; so that we know not which way to look for, or whence, according to any outward means or human probabilities, to expect our succour. in the midst of all, however, providence has put into our power a great variety of enjoyments by which life is or may be for the most part sweetened and made comfortable to us. there is a strength and fortitude naturally belonging to the mind of man, which may render evils tolerable; especially when it is aided and assisted by reason and reflection, by prudence and the moderation of our desires. several observations with respect to these ills of life, considered as objections insisted upon by some against the providence of God, have been already laid before you. but let me here both in farther answer to such objections, and likewise for your direction as to the manner of

LECT. XII. bearing these evils, and for your comfort and satisfaction under them, remind you as follows; that by such afflictions we are naturally put upon serious thought and recollection, that they have a direct tendencie to excite the due exertion of our rational faculties, and to a consideration of the true nature of human happiness. and by this means they produce upon the whole, a good far over-balancing their own pressure and weight of evil. by these disappointments and sorrows we are naturally put upon seeking our comfort in religion, and led to place our repose, our confidence and happiness in God. and is it not well worth our while to endure any ills of life for the sake of being brought to the devout and fervent love of God at last? or even of having the heavenly flame of devotion by means of them increased and heightened. and in a thoughtful, serious, well-tempered mind somewhat of this kind will assuredly arise out of the suffering scene, and be the effect of our afflictions. they will bring us nearer to God. they will be the means of uniting us more closely to him; and will thus be contributing to our truest felicitie and highest good. when we have made
God

God our "refuge and our hiding place," LECT. XII.
 we are at once safe from storms, and in a
 situation for enjoying the most sublime and
 exquisite felicities, "God, we are then
 "enabled to say, is my portion; I will
 "not fear what man can do unto me."
 many of the afflictions of life are in a man-
 ner annihilated and made to vanish into a
 thing of nought by the power of reli-
 gion. and others of them that may re-
 main, it enables us with ease to bear;
 according to that admirable advice and ex-
 hortation of the psalmist, "wait on the
 "lord and be of good courage, and he
 "shall strengthen thine heart. wait, I
 "say, on the lord." and then farther in
 the third place, the various calamities of
 human life are furnishing us with perpe-
 tual occasions, and supplying mankind
 with constant opportunities, for the exer-
 cise of the social affections, the tender and
 sympathising passions. and by this means
 the highest good is effected; we are formed
 into the temper of virtue; we are made
 like to God; we are made fit for heaven;
 and by the few transient scenes of calamitie
 and sorrow here occuring, ripened for an
 everlasting world, where there will be no

M 3

such

LECT. XII. such thing. the afflictions of others give
 { the opportunitie for exercising our kind-
 ness and good-will ; and by our own we
 are made more sensible of theirs, and con-
 sequently become more disposed to embrace
 that opportunitie. thus do the evils of our
 external condition naturally tend to make
 us thoughtful, rational, manly in our views,
 sedate in our temper, religious in our affec-
 tions, tender and sympathising in our dis-
 positions towards mankind. happie fruits !
 most desirable end and issue of them !

Religion.

But alas ! when we come to examine
 secondly, the religious state and condition
 of mankind, we are far from finding these
 fruits universally to arise out of them : and
 in this the actual state and condition of
 mankind with respect to religion, we shall
 see the reason why they do not. though
 as we have seen, man is a being naturally
 formed for the knowlege and contemplation
 of God ; yet how few are there who em-
 ploy their thoughts or exercise their reason
 in this way ? and yet so highly natural is
 religion to mankind, that they will have
 the appearance of it in one shape or an-
 other. and from this natural tendencie of
 the human mind to religion, in conjunction
 with

with so sad a neglect of employing our reasonable powers aright in the contemplation and study of religious truths and principles, have arisen those superstitions that have been so mightily prevalent in the world, and the cause of so many dire and horrid mischiefs among mankind. many have been tempted dishonestly to give their countenance to these superstitions; even though they themselves were well enough convinced of the follie and vanitie of them. thus there has been so much the less probability of their being removed out of the way. and in the mean time those, who with greater innocence have embraced these false notions concerning deitie and religion, have had their tempers at once corrupted and disturbed by them. for it is not every thing that men may call religion that can afford us the comforts of it, but only true religion itself; religion in its own genuine principles and nature. we may call those principles the truths and doctrines of religion, which are directly contrarie to the real system of religion; and if so, can it at all be wondered at that they should have contrarie effects? that they should not produce the same? and then a great many

LECT. XII. others there are, who never think about
religion at all; who call it all superstition;
who despise it in every shape and form;
and who are so strangely infatuated, as to
value themselves not a little upon daring
to do this. “ of this, my good children,
“ you will see sad and melancholy instances
“ when you come to look about you in the
“ world, and observe the conduct of man-
“ kind. but I hope you will ever remem-
“ ber, that to despise religion, is in effect
“ to despise God your maker, whose nature
“ and perfections are the foundation and
“ object of it. and glad, exceding glad,
“ shall I be, if what in these our evening
“ exercises I have been saying to you
“ concerning God, his goodness and his
“ love to you, and his power to make you
“ either happie or miserable, shall have
“ made such an impression upon your
“ minds, as that you will ever look upon
“ it as the most odious, the most ungrate-
“ ful, the most absurd and foolish dispo-
“ sition that can possibly be indulged, to
“ be indifferent to the sentiments of reli-
“ gion; indifferent whether we love God
“ or not; whether he approves of us or
“ not; or even whether there be a God or
“ not.

“ not. I am sure the wiser and better you LECT. XII.
 “ are, so much the greater horror will you
 “ have of such a temper.” is it not sad
 and grievous that, whilst God is ever so
 intimately nigh to us by his supporting
 and all-sustaining presence, by the acts of
 his power, in the wonders of his love, yet
 we should in temper and affection be almost
 intirely estranged from him ! who can re-
 flect without a pious indignation, that it
 should be the language of any human crea-
 ture to God his maker ; “ depart from
 “ me ; I desire not the knowlege of thy
 “ ways ; who art thou, that I should
 “ serve thee ? ” and yet what vast numbers
 are there amongst mankind, with respect
 to whose temper and actions this language
 expresses the apparent meaning and import
 of them, though there be something in it
 too horrid even for themselves to avow in
 words ? a circumstance of itself alone suf-
 ficient to convince them of their folly, if
 they were not indeed almost hardened be-
 yond conviction. but such is the religious
 state and condition of mankind. we are
 naturally capable of religion and disposed
 to it ; but yet through vanitie, levitie, in-
 consideration, and the power of corrupt

LECT. XII. example, sadly unmindful of it. “the ox
“ knoweth his owner, and the ass his
“ master’s crib.” but we “forget the
“ God who formed us, and lightly esteem
“ the rock of our salvation.” “but yet,
“ my good children, there is a great deal
“ of religion to be seen in the world,
“ which you are to consider as the public
“ testimonie of mankind given in favor
“ of it, and which should excite your cu-
“ riositie to enquire into the nature and
“ meaning of it. you see your parents
“ and others, the whole neighbourhood,
“ the whole citie, and you presume the
“ same of the whole country and kingdom,
“ assembling themselves together upon the
“ stated days of public devotion. now by
“ these actions God is solemnly acknow-
“ leged as the creator and ruler of the
“ world. and you may very naturally
“ imagine that mankind all over the world
“ could scarce have agreed so unanimously
“ as they do in such a practice as this, if
“ there had not been some very obvious
“ and convincing proofs of God’s being
“ and government, which you to be sure,
“ as well as many others, who have lived
“ before you, may be very sensible of, if
“ you

“ you will but seriously apply your minds LECT. XII.
 “ to seeking of God your maker, “ who
 “ giveth songs in the night.” “ *who giveth*
 “ *songs in the night* ; you may be ready to
 “ ask perhaps, what is the meaning of that?
 “ why, it means the joy and comfort,
 “ which God gives to those of mankind,
 “ who humbly wait upon, and devoutly
 “ adore him in their afflictions.” “ songs”
 are a token of joy. and “ the night” is
 a gloomy season ; and is therefore a proper
 emblem of affliction ; so that to “ give songs
 in the night” is to give comfort in affliction.

The moral state of the world is much Morals.
 the same as the religious state of it. man
 is made for virtue as well as religion ;
 which are indeed in the true and genuine
 idea of them very closely and inseparably
 connected ; but he sadly neglects the one
 as well as the other. and yet so powerful
 are the tendencies of nature to both, that
 he cannot wholly overlook either the
 one or the other. “ when therefore you,
 “ my children, come to look abroad in
 “ the world, if you do it with a candid
 “ eye and after a friendly good-natured
 “ manner, you will see a great deal of
 “ generosity and kindness, of gratitude,

LECT. XII.

“ meekness, patience and forgiveness among
“ mankind, which you yourselves must
“ be desirous to imitate in your own tem-
“ per, and to cherish in the minds of others.
“ but yet you will perceive that there is
“ not any thing like so much of these in the
“ conduct and dispositions of human kind
“ as might naturally be expected, and as
“ would in fact take place, were we but as
“ mindful as we ought to be either of God
“ or of our own natures. and in many
“ instances you will see most sad and la-
“ mentable departures from a spirit of this
“ kind. and, if the sight and observation
“ of these do but increase your own indig-
“ nation against vice and wickedness, it
“ will be well and happy for you. and
“ from what we have thus far been insist-
“ ing upon concerning the external, the
“ religious and the moral condition of
“ mankind, you will easily collect what
“ notion is to be formed of human happi-
“ ness as enjoyed here upon earth; that
“ the present is far from being a state of
“ perfect felicitie; that yet there is a great
“ deal of satisfaction and comfort enjoyed
“ by mankind on earth; that there might
“ be a great deal more, were they but more
“ thought-

“ thoughtful, and more attentive to religi-
ous interests and concerns, and the cul-
tivation of virtue and the moral temper ;
and that all the true and solid happiness
that is enjoyed amongst us is owing to
such a spirit : and that therefore, if you
would either be happy yourselves, or
make others so, you must live piously
and delight in goodness yourselves, and
endeavor so far as your influence may
reach to persuade others to the love and
pursuit of piety, and to the cultivation
of the same friendly and benevolent
dispositions.” thus have we considered
the nature of man and his present condi-
tion. that glorious interesting topic, his
hopes in relation to futurity, and the ac-
complishment of them in the blessed world
above, must be reserved for the next oppor-
tunity we shall have of meeting upon this
occasion.

L E C T U R E XIII.

LEC. XIII. **W**HEN we treated last in these our evening exercises upon the great, all-important, universally interesting and infinitely momentous topic of religion, it was observed that human hope had for its object both the good things of the present life, and the great realities and events, pleasures and enjoyments of a future state of being. with relation to the former, we then took notice that there are too very different ways or methods according to which our hopes are entertained and very commonly cherished by mankind, so as to render them under one of these classes or arrangements altogether chimerical and visionary, and which are therefore for the most part disappointed; whereas those belonging to the other being rational and upon fair and probable grounds assumed and taken up, come generally to be gratified in the end. how happy would it be for us, did we but confine ourselves as much as possible to these latter! and these, it was then observed, would, as we presumed, be found the

the proper emblem of that other hope, in LEC. XIII.
 which we are so much more nearly concerned, than in any thing that can befall
 us here; that hope or expectation I mean, Future state,
 which we all of us with so much joy embrace of living hereafter in the world of
 spirits, and of entering ere long upon it.
 an hope, which looks “into that which is arguments
 “within the veil,” which penetrates beyond the utmost bounds of time, and which
 gives us the cheering, triumphant prospect of being placed so soon in a situation, where
 no calamities can any longer annoy us, where we shall be for ever enjoying the
 happy fruits of those we now bemoan, and under which we ourselves are actually laboring,
 as well as be acquainted with the many beneficial consequences in that blessed world
 arising out of those, which others are now enduring, and we ourselves so oft behold
 with a lamenting and sympathetic eye. that this hope, so glorious, so animating,
 is indeed of the kind I have hinted, or, in other words, an hope founded upon
 the most solid and convincing arguments; arguments, which the most inquisitive and
 searching mind may with the utmost satisfaction rely upon, is what I am now to in proof of.
 shew.


LEC. XIII. shew. indeed, to us, who are favored with
 the *lively*, infallible *oracles* of christian truth,
 there is the most ample and decisive attesta-
 tion given upon this head by the authoritie
 itself of these *lively oracles*, and in the exprefs,
 frequent and most solemnly repeted as-
 surances of our blessed savior and his holy
 apostles, to whom “ God has borne witness
 “ by signs and wonders, and divers miracles
 “ and gifts of the Holie Ghost. by them
 “ life and immortalitie” have been in a most
 glorious sense “ brought to light.” and
 upon this foundation we may with the utmost
 safety rejoice in the firm perswasion of being
 one day admitted to see the glorie of God
 as manifested and made known in the now
 inconceivable and inexpressible felicities,
 objects, employments and entertainments
 of the heavenly state. “ but had you, my
 “ dear children, the expectation of becom-
 “ ing possessed ere long of some fair and
 “ ample fortune in this world, by which
 “ you were to be much raised above your
 “ present rank, and even above many of
 “ those, whom you now look upon, though
 “ I hope without any envy, as your supe-
 “ riors in this particular, would it be at all
 “ displeasing to you to have this hope con-
 “ firmed

“ firmed by a varietie and number of wit- LEC. XIII.
“ nesses, who should all agree in giving }
“ you the strongest reasons for entertain-
“ ing it, and believing that it would in
“ a little time be gratified and accom-
“ plished? would you not hearken to *each*
“ of them? would you think that what
“ any one had to say to you on this head
“ was at all superfluous, because you knew
“ of *another*, who could likewise give you
“ satisfaction in relation to it? would you
“ not on the contrary rejoice in the varietie
“ of the evidence as greatly corroborating
“ and strengthening your hope? but how
“ much more pleased should you be with
“ seeing this increase of evidence in relation
“ to your hope of a future world? there
“ will soon be an end to the highest honors
“ of the present life, and, in a little time,
“ the largest treasure of worldly riches,
“ that you can by any means acquire, will
“ perish and decay, or, which is all one,
“ you yourselves will be taken from the
“ possession of them; but if you are once
“ entered upon the happiness of futuritie,
“ you will find it to be as complete in its
“ nature, so likewise endless in its duration.
“ I hope therefore it will be a great plea-
“ sure

LEC. XIII. “ sure and satisfaction to you to hear of
“ having the realitie of this future happi-
“ nefs proved by the *light of nature*, and by
“ arguments and reasons deduced from the
“ innate and well-grounded suggestions of
“ our own minds:” that is to say, by
such arguments as we might have made
use of, and been acquainted with and seen
the force of them, even though we had
never had any knowlege of Jesus Christ,
or of the declarations of his gospel. the
proving of it in this way will by no means
weaken or invalidate, or any way derogate
from that clear and certain proof of this
article that is to be drawn from the autho-
ritie of his religion ; but will be just so
much additional strength to our evidence
and proof upon the whole in relation to
this so interesting and joyful a speculation.
we will therefore go on, if you please, to
enquire a little into this subject according
to the manner we have now been speaking
of. and in doing this we will endeavor,
first, to point out the realitie of a future
state ; secondly, consider somewhat of the
nature of those rewards and punishments
that will be distributed in it ; and then,
thirdly, enumerate some of those inferences
which

which are to be made, and which we may ^{Lec. XIII.} naturally found upon this principle or doctrine. as to the first of these particulars, the realitie of a future state of rewards and punishments, it is to be proved, first, from the nature and perfections of God; his goodness, his holiness, his power and his wisdom. secondly, from the inward frame and structure, the mental passions and affections of man himself. thirdly, from his condition here, or the conduct of divine providence towards him in the present state. these are the three grand and general sources of argument upon this so highly momentous topic, so far as we can carrie our reflexions upon it, without having recourse to the special illuminations and miraculous testimonie of the gospel. upon each of these then I will now briefly insist. there is something very pleasing in the following description of the nature, power and efficacie of religion, which has been given us by Doctor Lucas in his inquirie after happiness. “ religion, says he, rectifies our
“ opinions and dispells our errors, and
“ routs those armies of imaginarie evils,
“ which terrifie and torment the world
“ much more than spirits and ghosts do.
“ this

Lxx. XIII. " this discovers to us objects worthy of all
 " the love and admiration of our souls.
 " this expiates our guilt and extinguishes
 " our fear. this shews us the happiness
 " of our present condition, and opens to
 " us a glorious prospect of our future one.
 " this discovers to us the happy tendencie
 " of temporal evils, and the glorious re-
 " ward of them; and, in one word, teaches
 " us both to enjoy and suffer. it moderates
 " our desires of things uncertain and out
 " of our power, and fixes them upon those
 " things, for which we can be responsible.
 " it raises the mind, clears the reason;
 " and finally forms us into such an united,
 " settled and compacted state of strength,
 " that neither the judgement is easily
 " shaken, nor the affections hurried by
 " any violent transport or emotion."
 " you see, my good children, how much
 " the truth and propriety of this descrip-
 " tion depends upon that doctrine of a
 " future state, which you perceive to be
 " referred to in it." who then would not
 wish to have all these glorious effects of re-
 ligion ascertained and made to be reasonable
 in the expectation of them, by the fullest
 establishment and clearest proof of that doc-
 trine?

trine? let us procede then to inquire what Lxx. XIII.
evidence in favor of it is to be derived from 
those several and distinct topics or sources of
argument that have just now been men-
tioned, to wit, in the first place, from the
nature and perfections of God, his good-Divine at-
ness, his holiness, his power and his wis-tributes.
dom. this is an argument, the intire force
of which cannot be comprehended but in a
comparative view, and as connected with
that which is to follow, and which is
founded upon the nature and constitution of
man. however some separate observations
may usefully be made relatively to each of
them; after which their united force shall be
briefly pointed out. from the idea which we
are naturally led to form of the absolute
and unlimited power of the deitie, we may
plainly and evidently collect that our exist-
ence hereafter must at least fall within the
possibilities of nature. “you, my children,
“ will easily perceive that it must needs be
“ altogether as easy for the supreme being
“ to continue your existence in another
“ world as it is to support it now, or as it
“ was originally to bring you into being.
“ you can do one thing and not another;
“ nay, the very same thing you can do at
“ one

LEC. XIII. “ one time and not at another. and why?
 “ because there are impediments and ob-
 “ structions lying in your way, proceeding
 “ from some other acting power in nature,
 “ and which impediments it is wholly be-
 “ yond your abilitie to remove. but you
 “ will immediately perceive from what has
 “ in the course of these exercises been laid
 “ before you, that nothing of this kind
 “ can happen or take place with respect to
 “ the intentions and will of the deitie. if
 “ the divine being wills your existence
 “ hereafter, there is none, no man, no
 “ angel, no devil, no inhabitant of any
 “ world whatsoever, that can *stay his hand,*
 “ *or say unto him what doest thou.* so that as
 “ to the idea or possibilitie of the thing, it
 “ is altogether as easy for you to conceive
 “ that you may exist in another world, as
 “ that you may be alive to-morrow in this.
 “ and this let me observe to you, is no in-
 “ considerable point in an argument of so
 “ much consequence; that the thing,
 “ which we would prove is in the notion
 “ or idea of it, of as easy comprehension
 “ as any of those familiar views or objects,
 “ which you are every day conversant
 “ with. you will not at all wonder to
 “ find

“ find yourselves alive to-morrow, though Lec. XIII.
“ you ought to be very thankful for it to
“ that God, *in whose hands your breath is,*
“ *and whose are all your ways,* and to whom
“ alone you will be indebted for this far-
“ ther extension of your being. many
“ children, as well as persons of riper years,
“ are very suddenly cut off by death, and
“ whenever it seems fit and proper to sove-
“ reign wisdom that it should be so. but
“ I say, you would not at all wonder, my
“ good child, to find yourself alive to-mor-
“ row. now it ought not in reason to be
“ any greater matter of surprize to you,
“ that you are to live hereafter or in an-
“ other world. *for with the lord a thousand*
“ *years is as one day, and one day as a thousand*
“ *years.* and surely, my dear children,
“ when you recollect what has been so
“ largely said to you concerning the good-
“ ness of God, nothing, I imagine, could
“ appear to you more natural, than the
“ supposing that his goodness, so free, so
“ disinterested, so large, so exuberant as it
“ appears in fact to be from the surround-
“ ing works of nature, and in the perpe-
“ tual operations of his providence, should
“ incline him to continue your being
“ beyond

LEÇ. XIII. “ beyond the short and scanty limits of
 “ this world. the higher opinion you
 “ have of any earthly friend, of your own
 “ father, for instance, or mother, the
 “ firmer persuasion you have that they will
 “ continue to be as kind to you hereafter
 “ as they are at present ; and that far from
 “ being disposed to deprive you of any
 “ good which you enjoy, they will be ra-
 “ ther inclined to multiplie the comforts
 “ of your being, and to enlarge and height-
 “ en the happiness of it. why then should
 “ you ever suspect that a being, who is
 “ infinite in goodness, should be so far
 “ from continuing to be good to you after
 “ death, as at this destined hour to deprive
 “ you even of that grand blessing, which is
 “ the foundation of all besides, your very
 “ existence itself ? that after so very short
 “ a period, he should cease to have any
 “ kindness for you at all ; nay, that he
 “ should then act the very cruellest part
 “ towards you that can possibly be ima-
 “ gined, next to the making you eternally
 “ miserable ; namely, the striking you out
 “ of being for ever. upon these plain and
 “ obvious principles it must needs, I think,
 “ appear, that the higher notions you have
 “ of

“ of the divine goodness, so much the less Lec. XIII.
 “ able you will be to suppose that God
 “ should deprive you of your being after a
 “ few years only passed here upon earth,
 “ and the more readily will you conclude
 “ another state to be ordained for man.”


when we mentioned the holiness of God in the stating of this argument, we did it to shew, that if there be a future state at all, it must needs be a state of happiness and reward to the good, and of punishment and miserie to the wicked. and this is a truth that you will easily perceive must necessarily and directly flow from that acknowledged attribute of the deitie. for being that *righteous lord* and sovereign ruler who *loveth righteousness*, and consequently righteous persons, nothing can be more absurd than to imagine that a future state should be to any such a state of miserie and torment. and it would be equally absurd to imagine that to any of those who enter upon it with depraved and wicked dispositions, it should be a state of blifs. for God cannot “ take
 “ pleasure in iniquitie.” yet what could be a greater evidence of his doing so, than the admission of the wicked and ungodly into a state of perfect, heavenly and ever-

N

lasting

Lec. XIII. lasting felicitie? this is the highest possible
 token that can be given of the divine love,
 even to the best and most virtuous of man-
 kind. it is therefore a manifestation of it
 that cannot surely be extended alike to the
 wicked and prophane. nor would it be at
 all consistent with the wisdom of God,
 another attribute which we mentioned as
 comprehended in this first topic of argu-
 ment, and in the general scope of it, that
 vice and wickedness should be thus trium-
 phant hereafter. this would be giving it
 so much countenance as would be utterly
 inconsistent with the essential holiness of
 the divine being, and consequently with
 the nature and design of his moral govern-
 ment. but secondly, the realitie of a fu-
 ture state may be very strongly infered from
 the nature of man himself; from his in-
 ward make and structure, his mental pow-
 ers and affections. man is a noble creature.
 he stands eminent and superior in rank of
 being; foremost and chief among all the
 works of God below. and a most prodi-
 gious difference there is between him and
 any of the brute creation. those of them
 that make the most superb and stately ap-
 pearance in the animal tribe itself, what
 are

Human

are they when compared with man, who LEC. XIII. is made capable of religion and virtue, of  knowing and worshiping God, and even of powers. resembling his perfections? and in contemplations exercises and attainments of this kind he is naturally qualified for making a perpetual progress, far beyond what the narrow limits of this world will admit of, even supposing his religious and moral improvements to be carried on at ever so great a rate; nay, the more any man knows, and the longer he lives in the pursuit of knowlege, the more he perceives himself capable of knowing, the more eager he is after still farther knowlege, and the more exquisitely delightful he finds the pursuit and acquisition of it to be to him, and he cannot but apprehend that it will be continually more and more delightful to him the longer he continues to be so employed and in this manner entertained. the same observations are applicable to his religious and moral character. the more he loves God, the more he perceives himself capable of advancing in this divine affection, the more he desires to do it, and the greater idea he forms of the happiness that will result from going on to perfection in

LEC. XIII. these devout aspirations of the mind. the
 { more he delights in virtue, in imitating
 God, and doing good, the more raised
 and elevated are his ideas of the happiness
 to flow out of such a temper yet farther
 cultivated and improved, from the conti-
 nued incessant progress of it, and from a
 farther extended series of such godlike
 action. this then being the case, this total,
 absolute, and in a manner infinite, dispa-
 ritie considered between man and any of
 the brute creation in their original powers
 and capacities of being, is it at all probable,
 can we possibly imagine, that they should
 be alike in death? or can any thing on the
 other hand be more probable or more natu-
 rally apprehended, than that there should
 here too be an answerable disparitie? or
 what can be more incongruous to our
 notions of the divine wisdom, than to ima-
 gine that man should be thus nobly distin-
 guished by the powers of his being from
 the brutal tribe, and yet with respect to
 the continuance of it be altogether upon a
 level with them? that he should be en-
 dowed with powers capable of being exer-
 cised and improved in a future and nobler
 scene of action and enjoyment, and yet his
 being

being be wholly confined to this? upon Lec. XIII.
such a supposition, what adequate end can
we perceive to be answered by his being
thus nobly endowed? “let it then, my
“ dear children, be deeply impressed upon
“ your minds, that you are beings made
“ capable of religion and virtue; and that
“ it is these which constitute even the hap-
“ piness of heaven itself, and of all the
“ glorious angels and arch-angels who
“ there inhabit; and you will, I am per-
“ suaded, apprehend it to be much more
“ probable, that you should be designed to
“ live ere long in company with these glo-
“ rious beings and in that blessed world,
“ and in pursuing with an everlasting
“ ardor the perfection of these your noble
“ faculties, than that you should lose your
“ being like the *brutes that perish.*” from
the nature of any work or fabric contrived
by human art, we make very probable con-
clusions as to the designed continuance of
them. a shepherd may run up a little hut
upon the downs without digging for a foun-
dation or bestowing any great expence or
labor upon it. and when we see him thus
employed, we judge that he designs it only
for a few days or months, at most, conveni-

Lec. XIII. {ence, and that it is then to be taken down again. but when we observe any person digging deep for the foundation of an house, and employing a great number of hands in laying it and in raising the superstructure, bestowing upon it a great many ornaments, dividing it into several apartments, some for one use and some for another, taking care to make every thing fast and sure, firm and solid, and putting himself to a vast expence of time and thought and labor and money for this purpose, we conclude of course that he has no design of pulling the house down as soon almost as it is built; or at least we should scarce admire his wisdom if he did so. the application of this similitude must needs I think be very easie.

“ and I will leave it to you, my children,
 “ to draw the argument yourselves, which
 “ I would suggest by it in favor of a future
 “ state; and would now go on to ask you,
 “ whether we may not in your opinion
 “ venture to look upon that eager desire
 “ and expectation of such a state that belongs to the mind of man, as being a
 “ plain intimation given us by the great
 “ former of our spirits, that we are indeed
 “ ordained to live in such a state?” we
 have

have many other natural desires and appetites belonging to us, such as hunger and thirst, in relation to the mere animal life and being; a love of truth, a love of novelty, a delight in great and magnificent objects, a taste for society and friendship, constituting so many parts in the intellectual and moral frame of man. and for the gratification and indulgence of every one of these desires, we find that the gracious author of our beings has in fact made a very plentiful provision. now the desire of a future state seems to be altogether as natural to us as any of these. why then should we imagine it to be the only natural inclination belonging to us that will be disappointed? it is the most important of them all. it is that without which the rest would be comparatively of little value. God can as easily gratify this as any of the other. and why should we suspect his goodness in this particular case alone, so fully verified and amply displayed in all besides? by how much the nobler (a) are the powers and faculties of our

(a) "The best way, says Mr. *Manlove*, to know that the soul is immortal, is to keep its noblest faculties in due exercise, and then they will speak for themselves." See his

LIEG. XIII. our being, so much the more difficult must
 { it be to reconcile the destruction of it either
 to the goodness or to the wisdom of the
 deitie. and this is what I meant by the
 comparative view of these two topics or
 sources of argument, the nature and attri-
 butes of deitie, and the constitution and
 frame of man. and in particular, the more
 intense and eager our hopes of happiness
 hereafter, so much the more improbable is
 it that the supreme being should not indulge
 us in the gratification of them; so much
 the more difficult to account for our being
 naturally led to entertain any such hope, if
 this be not designed.

Present dis-
 pensations.

But then farther still we mentioned, as
 you may remember, a third argument in
 proof of a future state appointed and or-
 dained for man; and which was to be de-
 duced from the condition of man here upon
 “ earth,

Discourse concerning the Immortalitie of the Soul,
 c. ix. p. 114. This seems to have been the
 argument of the ancient Druids. Inter hos
 Druidæ ingeniis celsiores, ut autoritas Pytha-
 goræ decrevit, sodalitiis adstricti consortiis,
 quæstionibus occultarum rerum altarumque
 erecti sunt, & despectantes humana pronun-
 tiarunt animas immortales. *Ammian. Marcell.*
 l. xv.

earth, or the conduct of divine providence Lec. XIII.
towards him in the present world. “ this

“ world, my good children, has all the
“ appearance imaginable of a state in
“ which we are to be trained up and disci-
“ plined for another. it is a state of edu-
“ cation. you perceive your own immedi-
“ ate and earthly parents to be bestowing a
“ great deal of thought and care upon you
“ in your present young and tender age,
“ and that not merely in providing suste-
“ nance for your animal life, but in form-
“ ing likewise your minds and manners,
“ and leading you into the knowlege of
“ this or the other science or art, which
“ you can make but very little use of at
“ present, and can scarce imagine it may
“ be of what benefit or advantage it can
“ be to you to be instructed in them. but
“ do you think that they would be at all
“ this trouble, if they were sure that you
“ would not live to be men and women ;
“ or if they had not the greatest reason to
“ presume that you would ? now this is
“ exactly the conduct of providence to-
“ wards us all. there are many things in
“ your present state of education under
“ your parents and teachers, that may per-

LXX. XIII. “ haps be somewhat troublesome, tedious,
 “ and vexatious to you, and from which
 “ you had much rather be excused. but
 “ they are designed to answer a good end
 “ bye-and-bye in your *future state* of man-
 “ hood, if it please God to bring you
 “ to it; and you yourselves will then be
 “ sensible of this.” thus God afflicts many
 good men here upon earth. even to the
 very latest moment of their lives they are
 exercised with sorrows of one kind or an-
 other; and these are the discipline of hea-
 ven for the improvement and perfecting of
 their virtue. but for what end can we sup-
 pose it to be carried on? why so much care
 taken for the bettering and improvement of
 their tempers, if after all themselves are to
 be so soon as by death annihilated? (a) so
 like-

(a) Non mihi itaque videtur hæc parva esse
 causa, quare cum malis flagellantur & boni,
 quando Deo placet perditos mores etiam tempo-
 raliū poenarum afflictione punire. flagellantur
 enim *simul*, non quia *simul* agant malam vitam,
 sed quia *simul* amant temporalem vitam: non
 quidem *æqualiter*, sed tamen *simul*, quam boni
 contemnere deberent, ut illi correpti atque
 correcti consequerentur æternam, ad quam con-
 sequendam si nollent esse socii, ferrentur & dili-
 gerentur inimici; quia donec vivunt semper
 incertum

likewise many of the blessings and enjoy-^{Lec. XIII.}ments of this life are of such a kind as to be naturally fitted for the improvement of the moral temper, and for exciting in our minds those views and affections, that are in the directest manner adapted to prepare us for another and a nobler state of being. God does not only supplie us with the meat that is by the nature of it suitable and convenient with respect to our bodily health and sustenance, but gives us likewise all things “richly to enjoy” for the culture of our minds, for the strengthening and improvement of our reason, for the refinement and exaltation of our virtue. we enjoy very ample means and opportunities of a religious nature. we have the blessed gospel of Christ in our hands. and Christ came into our world, notwithstanding all the amazing glorie and dignitie of which.

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incertum est, utrum voluntatem sint in melius mutaturi. *Aug. de Civitat. Dei*, l. i. c. ix. where we see the pious and judicious father insisting upon the afflictions which befall good men, as being a gracious discipline, intended not only to promote their own preparation for a future and immortal state, but also to have a like influence even upon the wicked by means of their example exhibited in the suitable improvement of them.

LEC. XIII. he was in the heavenly one possessed, on purpose to confer this blessing upon us ; a blessing purely spiritual, and relative to the higher interests of our being. but why all this care on the part of heaven in our religious and moral education, if not with a view to some other state in which the ends and purposes of it are to be completely answered ? what father appoints his son to be for a certain number of years employed in learning this or that particular art, occupation or profession, but with a view that he should exercise and employ himself in the same, when that period shall expire ? but thus our thoughts are naturally led to the christian plan. which, God willing, shall be the subject of our distinct consideration on the next opportunity.

LECTURE XIV.

THE three great sources of argument Lec. XIV.
upon that prime subject, the doctrine }
of a future state, we have already observed Future
to be as follows: first, the nature and per- state,
fections of the divine being, his goodness,
his holiness, his power and his wisdom;
secondly, the inward frame and struc-
ture, the mental powers and affections of
man himself; thirdly, his condition here
on earth, or the conduct of divine provi-
dence towards him in the present life. and
under each of these heads we have ende-
vored to evince the certaintie of it. but it
is of the highest importance to observe in
relation to some of the arguments which in
treating of these particulars have been in-
sisted upon, that they will be so much the
stronger for the farther continuance of our
being, after we have enjoyed the felicitie
of the heavenly world for thousands of ages,
and so on for thousands of ages still, than
they are now for the expectation in general
of a life to come. such I mean, as those
which were derived from the noble powers,
faculties,

LEC. XIV. faculties and affections of the human mind,
 and from the goodness of the supreme being, and that delight and complacencie which he ever takes in virtue and holiness. these faculties and affections of our minds, the longer they are exercised amidst the blifs and glories of futuritie, so much the more will they be enlarged and elevated, and so much the more capacious will they still be of greater happiness in a farther
 extended duration of our being. and the longer we exist in the possession of so sublime a felicitie, so much the stronger
 idea of. and more lively proof and demonstration shall we have of the goodness of the supreme deitie, and of the pleasure he takes both in the virtue and in the happiness of his reasonable and moral offspring, so much the more powerfully and feelingly shall we in this particular be convinced; consequently so much the more improbable will it appear, and so much the more unnatural in us to imagine, that he should by the annihilation of our being deprive us of them both. this therefore is one, and a most important one, of those inferences that are to be deduced from the topics that were insisted upon in our last exercise upon this
 occasion ;

occasion ; that there is not only a future, LEC. XIV.
but an immortal state of being ordained for man. and thus too we are furnished with
a noble and in the highest degree satisfying
illustration of what has been before insisted
upon, in answer to what is sometimes
thought so much to militate against the
supposed goodness of the supreme being,
namely, those calamities and evils of vari-
ous kinds, which so much perplex and
imbitter this present scene of things. we
said that all these evils might be graci-
ously and most benevolently on the part of
heaven intended to produce a far greater
quantitie or sum of good upon the whole,
by the happy consequence of them in some
other state of being than could otherways
have been effected. the realitie of this
other state of being has now been evidently
evinced. and in that permanent, everlasting
scene of existence, the proofs of which have
been thus so lately presented to your confi-
deration, what ample space has the divine
providence as it were allowed itself, in
which to operate after such a manner as to
produce these happie and delightful conse-
quences. and thus how gloriously may the
divine and sovereign being display the per-
fection

LEC. XIV. section of his benevolence and wisdom to
 all his creatures even of the human race,
 that shall be for ever triumphing with un-
 abating ardor and affection in these demon-
 strations of his eternal love? " what cala-
 " mitie or evil can you possibly imagine,
 " my good children, to take place in this
 " world, be it ever so heavy, ever so ex-
 " tensive, ever so lasting, which may not
 " in a future state of never-ending exist-
 " ence become the matter of exultation and
 " triumph on account of the happie effects,
 " with which in that state it will appear to
 " have been connected as the instrumental
 " and producing cause? effects eternal in
 " their duration, yet arising out of an evil,
 " which on account of its being an evil of
 " this life only, must needs have been al-
 " together momentarie and transient." the
 improvement which by means of such afflic-
 tions we make in virtue, is a good which is
 to be carried with us into another world,
 and will there be existing in our minds, and
 growing into a still greater good for ever;
 so that it is, properly speaking, an eternally
 good effect arising out of a transient and
 momentarie evil. thus again, it has been
 often looked upon as a considerable diffi-
 cultie

cultie in the scheme and dispensations of LEC. XIV. divine providence, that good men should so frequently be cut off by death in the midst of their days. this, it must be acknowledged, has indeed been often the case. some of the best of men, in all the vigor of their usefulness, and amidst the highest activities of their pious zeal, have been thus removed from our world. but then you perceive, according to what we have been insisting upon concerning the reality of a future state, that, though called out of this world, their happiness is going on in another, their virtuous progress is not at all interrupted, but on the contrary by this removal wonderfully facilitated, and in the highest degree befriended. it is a removal unspeakably advantageous to their own moral improvement. and though we cannot indeed but bemoan their absence; yet may we not justly and usefully look upon it as a punishment for the sins of those who are left behind? may it not answer some very valuable purposes in promoting our own seriousness and piety to be inquiring at least, whether it be or not? and the want of such good men no longer acting that brave and honorable part on earth, should stir up those

Lec. XIV. those who yet remain among us, to be proportionably more warm and vigorous in pursuing the same honorable measures. this will be highly advantageous to themselves. and when such is indeed the happy effect of a serious consideration employed upon the so early removal hence of men thus honorably distinguished, the benefit to the world may be upon the whole the same as if they had remained with us, their virtue being thus by means of their removal transfused into the minds of others. what an happy thing to himself was Elijah's translation into heaven? at the same time he was scarce missed in Israel, on account of that holy flame which in consequence of his removal was kindled up in the mind of Elisha. but then, then it is, that the decease of good men is the saddest loss, when they leave none at all, or but a very few indeed, that are equally good behind them. for all the forementioned reasons however, particularly on account of that so much greater happiness which they themselves enjoy in consequence, we see that the removal hence of such, even in the prime and vigor of life, cannot justly be considered as carrying in it any objection to the providence of the

the

the almighty. this would be in effect to LEC. XIV.
object to it, because the virtuous are made
happie, which would be a strange kind of
reasoning indeed ! but the argument, as you
perceive, supposes that they enter immedi-
ately upon the happiness of a future state.
and surely we must believe it to be altoge-
ther as easy to the divine being to carry on
the happiness of the virtuous without breach
or interruption, as to revive or renew it
after a long intervening state of unconsci-
ousness and insensibilitie. and the one be-
ing altogether as easily conceived of as the
other, which is it, I would ask, that ap-
pears most consistent with the ideas we en-
tertain concerning the exuberance and per-
fection of the divine goodness ? or what
can be more unnatural than to imagine
that the gracious, sovereign being, whose
real design towards us is eternal felicitie,
should nevertheless grudge us such a com-
paratively small, but yet in itself interest-
ing portion of happiness, as may be en-
joyed between death and the resurrection ?
it is as if any one should bestow upon us a
large and ample fortune for life, and yet
grudge us the sustenance or the provisions
of a single day ; which we should at least
look

LEC. XIV. look upon as being strangely whimsical and capricious. and the scriptures seem plainly to suppose that all mankind upon their decease have their habitation or lot assigned them either in heaven or hell. but a state of insensibilitie is neither one nor the other; nor is it possible to conceive of any moral ends or uses that can be answered by it. (a) whereas

(a) And indeed, says Mr. Grove, if we strictly examine the notion of the *utter extinction* of the being, and its *reproduction* after a certain interval of time, it will appear highly absurd to reason; for after it has once ceased to exist, the same *individual* thinking being can never exist more: a new one may be produced exactly like the former, and so may a *thousand* more; but that will not make them all to be the same being; as it would do for the same reason, as any one of them may be the same with *that* which had an end put to its existence some time ago, whether a longer or a shorter, makes no difference. after there has been a gap or separating space of time, nothing can possibly unite the being existing before, and that which exists after into one. and this alone, to those who believe a resurrection, may be instead of a thousand arguments of the soul's not dying with the body; because in that case the resurrection would not be barely *refitting up the body*, that it might be united to *the same conscious principle*, with which it was in union before (and which had never for a moment ceased to exist, and so might

whereas even in the miseries of a future Lxc. XIV.
 world inflicted by the supremely governing
 deitie

might have a title to be rewarded or punished, for what was done in a former body) but *producing another conscious principle*; new as to its very *substance*, if the soul be *immaterial*, and *annihilated*; or at least as to the *principle of life and consciousness*, if it be *matter*; which would constitute it a *distinct individual agent*, having no interest in the good or bad conduct of that other; though, perhaps, it resembles it as nearly as one being can another. the reasoning of *Lucretius* here would be just enough. *Nec si materiam nostram conlegerit ætas, &c.* that if time should gather together our materials after death, and after they were reduced into the same situation, life should be superadded, yet would not that signify any thing to us; any more than it does what beings had been composed of the same stuff before we were born. See his *Treatise on a Future State*, c. viii. §. xi. p. 110—112.

Q. 1. *I have often wondered why there is nothing in the creed of the immortality of the soul, and its state before the resurrection.*

A. 1. The article of *Christ's descent* tells us, that his soul was among the *separated souls*, while his body was in the grave: as he told the thief, that he *should be that day with him in paradise*.
 2. The *resurrection* of the body is a thing not known at all by nature, but only by *supernatural revelation*, and therefore is an article of mere belief: but the *immortalitie* or *future life of souls*, is a point which the *light of nature revealeth*, and therefore was taken both by *Jews* and sober
 Heathens

LEC. XIV. deitie for crimes that have been committed
 { in this, the designs of a moral government
 will

Heathens as a truth of common notice: even as the *love of ourselves* is not expressed in the *ten commandments*, but only the love of God and others, because it was a thing pre-supposed. 3. *The immortality of the soul* is included in the article of the resurrection of the body: for if the soul continue not, the next at the resurrection would be *another soul*, and a new created one and not the same: and then the body would not be the *same soul's body*, nor the *man* the same *man*, but another. who was ever so unwise to think that God had so much more care of the *body* than of the *soul*, as that he would let the *soul* *perish*, and raise the *body* from the dust alone, and join it with another soul? 4. Very learned and wise expositors think that the Greek word (*Anastasis*) used for *resurrection*, indeed signifieth the *whole life after this*, both of *soul first*, and *body also after*, oft in the New Testament: it is a *living again*, or *after this life*, called, a *standing up again*: and there is great probability of it in Christ's argument with the *Sadducees*, and some passages of Paul's, 1 Cor. xv. Baxter's *Catechizing of Families*, c. xxi. p. 154, 155. To the same purpose Dr. Clarke. The notion, says he, of the *soul's immaterialitie* evidently facilitates the belief of a *resurrection* and of a future retribution, by securing a principle of *personal individuality*, upon which the justice of all reward or punishment is intirely founded; but if *thinking* be in realitie nothing but a *power* or *mode*, which inhering in a loose and fleeting system

will be still advancing towards their final REC. XIV. accomplishment, and the perfections of the great God and father of the universe be even by these in the grand result illustrated and displayed to the view of his intelligent creation. “ for far be it from you, my “ good children, to imagine that the wicked “ are punished in a future state out of any “ such principle in the deitie as revenge, “ or what we call passion. no; but you “ are to consider such punishments as the “ measures of a wise and benevolent ruler “ or governor in the moral universe.” the best earthly sovereign that ever lived never thought it inconsistent with his goodness to punish malefactors; and his subjects would soon have found the dreadful effects of his not doing so (a). if you ask whence these punish-

system of matter, perishes utterly at the dissolution of the body; then the restoring the power of *thinking* to the same body *at the resurrection*, will not be a raising again of the *same individual person*; but it will be as truly a *creation of a new person*, as the addition of the like power of *thinking* to a new body *now*, would be the *creation of a new man*. See his *Third Defence*, p. 88.

(a) It is upon these principles that an ingenious author thus expresses himself in commenting upon a passage in one of Cicero's Orations.
“ Tully's

LEC. XIV. punishments of the wicked will arise, or in
 { what it is they consist : I answer ; first, in
 the

“ Tully’s business in this Oration was to paint
 “ out Clodius in his true colors, to let people
 “ see into the hands of what an ill man they
 “ had given the power of a tribune, to let his
 “ judges see what a guilty wretch they had ab-
 “ solved ; to convince his whole audience that
 “ a villain absolved by corrupt judges could
 “ not yet but be miserable, through the irre-
 “ gularity of his passions and affections and the
 “ consciousness of his misdeeds : pursuant to
 “ this purpose it was proper for him to distin-
 “ guish between the punishments exacted by
 “ men, which were sometimes bought off, and
 “ those inflicted by the Gods, which were
 “ never to be avoided ; the one reaching body
 “ and goods, the other the mind. The Gods
 “ interpose not in what concerns the former ;
 “ their inflictions are laid on the mind. self-
 “ consciousness and reflection are the ministers
 “ of their vengeance ; they make use of no
 “ other to punish wickedness. This is all that
 “ Tully says ; and many good men, as well
 “ christians as deists, who believe the future
 “ state, will say upon the matter the same thing.
 “ but, though according to Tully, the Gods
 “ have ordained only self-consciousness and re-
 “ flection to punish wickedness in this life, may
 “ they not have ordained this also, though this
 “ only, to punish it hereafter ? I say not ever-
 “ lastingly, for Tully had other notions of the
 “ Gods than that comes to ; but so long at
 “ least,

the remorse of their own conscience; by ^{Lxx. XIV.} this some have been even plagued to death while in this world. and it will be a much greater source of torment in the other, because there will be nothing there to divert their attention from these dismal reflections, or to alleviate the pains of a self-accusing mind. secondly, the worst of company, whose business and delight it will be to insult and deride, to tantalize and torment them, out of pride and envie. thirdly, a most lively sense of having forfeited the divine favor, and being in a state of alienation from the best of beings. it is oftentimes a matter of no small vexation and uneasiness even here, to think of having by our own imprudence and folly, forfeited the friendship of some wise and worthy man. imagine then, if you can, what a vexation and torment it must needs be to any one in

“ least, till the punishment shall work a change
 “ of mind in the sufferer, and then the punish-
 “ ment cannot but cease. I interest not myself
 “ in the case, but take it for granted that
 “ Tully could make the Gods authors of no
 “ punishments, but what were designed for the
 “ amendment of the sufferer, and the instruc-
 “ tion of the beholder.” See *Free Thoughts on*
a Future State, p. 45, 46.

LEC. XIV. his most deeply reflecting moments, to be continually accusing and upbraiding himself for having forfeited the friendship of his God! and being now excluded from a sublime and glorious felicitie, which he himself might have been enjoying as well as others, had it not been for his own wilfulness and folly! and by considering only and reflecting upon the direct contrary of all these particulars, you may easily furnish yourselves with some notion or idea, enough to animate all the efforts of your minds, be it only duly attended to, of the happiness of futurity. as dreadful and tormenting as are the agonizing tortures of an accusing conscience, so great, satisfying and delightful will be the pleasures of an approving one; of reviewing and looking back upon our own integritie, and that unshaken fortitude, with which by divine grace we have been enabled to maintain our contest with sin and folly, whether that of our own or others. the greater difficulty, opposition, hazard, fear and despondencie in the progress of our virtue here, so much the more exquisitely joyful will be the reflection of our minds upon having at length and for ever surmounted all. and if we cannot

cannot but look upon it as being the very LXX. XIV.
worst of evils to be banished from the fa-
vorable and propitious presence of God our
maker, and to live under the perpetual,
keen and most pungent sense of a loss so
inexpressibly great, we may by this means
come to form some idea or notion of that
intense and elevated happiness, which can-
not but be the result of a directly contrary
state and situation, of being the objects of
divine complacencie and love, and most in-
timately conscious of it. and then, thirdly,
when we reflect upon the amazing number
of other holy, heavenly, virtuous men, who
are gone before us into that happy state of
being towards which we ourselves are daily
tending, and how many more will follow
us thither ; what a prodigious company of
pure and virtuous spirits from every quarter
of the universe have been, and will be con-
tinually resorting to it, and what a vast in-
conceivable number more there is, who have
from the beginning had their residence and
habitation in it, what an idea must this
give us of those pleasures of societie and
friendship, of harmony, love and union
that are there to be enjoyed ! nothing how-
ever can furnish us with a more pleasing

Lxx. XIV. sentiment of this nature, than our reflecting
 upon that close, inseparable union, which
 we shall then have with our lord Jesus
 Christ himself, the great "author" of eter-
 nal happiness to all those, who believe in
 and "obey him," and the "captain" of
 our "salvation." "this is he, as an inge-
 " nious writer expresses it, will the sepa-
 " rate soul then say, who put on our nature
 " with its infirmities, but by his resurrec-
 " tion and ascension on high, has changed
 " his infirmities into glory. this is he,
 " who conversed here below in mean con-
 " dition among men, and behold him
 " raised above the magnificence of all
 " the angels. this is he that once suffered
 " the *contradiction of sinners*, but receives
 " now the applause and veneration of all
 " the inhabitants of heaven. this is he
 " that ignominiously hung upon a cross,
 " but now all creatures behold him with
 " reverence and trembling. this is he,
 " that here below suffered death, but who
 " now holds in his hands the life of all
 " things and the substance of the universe.
 " this is he that was once seen lying in a
 " dark tomb, in comparison of whom now
 " the splendor of the sun is but as a shadow.
 " this

" this is he was thought unworthy that Lec. XIV.
 " the earth should bear him, who now
 " walks upon the heavens, and under
 " whose feet the whole fabric of the earth
 " does tremble. this is he *in whom* I once
 " *believed* "only," but whom I now *see*
 " fully and manifestly, and to whom I have
 " liberty to *approche* without fear, and
 " *behold him face to face.*" such then, my
 " children, is the notion or idea that
 " you are to form of the happiness of
 " the heavenly world, and of the rewards
 " of (a) virtue there to be conferred."
 and we may easily see the shocking impropriety there must be in the conduct of any one, who expecting to participate in so great and glorious an happiness as this, should demean himself to the baseness of a vicious and worldly spirit.

But the reflections now last insisted upon Christian
 naturally lead us to what we proposed this revelation,
 evening to enter upon; the more distinct

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(a) Rewards, which, though they be too great to be understood by the sons of men, yet are not so great, but that they may be expected by us, when we shall be adopted to be the sons of that God; whose power to bestow, can be equaled by nothing but by his desire to gratifie. See Mackenzie's *Moral Paradox*, p. 52.

LEC. XIV. consideration namely of the christian scheme
 of religion. “ and the first question, my
 “ good children, which naturally offers
 “ itself upon this head is, what you sup-
 “ pose to be meant by christianitie or the
 “ christian religion? and you will answer
 “ no doubt, that by christianitie, or the
 “ christian religion, according to the ap-
 “ prehension you have entertained, is to
 “ be understood those doctrines and duties
 “ that were preached and published in the
 “ world by Jesus Christ and his apostles,
 “ Peter, Paul, James and others; the
 “ knowlege of which doctrines and duties
 “ are communicated to us in the writings of
 “ the new testament; and to the truth and
 “ authoritie of which God has borne wit-
 “ nesses by *signs and wonders and divers miracles*
 what. “ *and gifts of the Holie Ghost.* so that chri-
 “ stianitie you are to look upon as a divine
 “ revelation of religion superadded to the
 “ original and primarie light of nature in
 “ relation to it.” many of the doctrines
 of it are the same with those of natural
 religion. but then they are differently re-
 veled; namely, by the personal authoritie
 of our lord Jesus Christ, as the great pro-
 phet of God, and the miraculous attesta-
 tions


tions which accompanied his publication of LEC. XIV. them. so that even with respect to these doctrines taught by the light of nature, you are to consider it as being a vast advantage resulting from christianitie, that by means of it an additional and twofold evidence has been given to them. we have their importance by this means more strongly inculcated upon us, and the authoritie and truth of them so much more firmly evinced. and then farther these doctrines of original, primitive and natural religion christianitie has enforced and enlightened, not only by its authoritie as more directly and immediately applied to them, but likewise by a great varietie of doctrines peculiar to itself, supported by the same authoritie; and all illustrating and confirming these great maxims of primitive revelation. “now, my good children, you will easily
 “perceive that such an additional and special revelation of religion as that which
 “I have been speaking of is *possible*.” that Possible, there are other intelligent beings besides ourselves inhabiting other worlds, is a sentiment founded even upon the discoveries and conclusions of nature itself, as we have already in the course of these lectures had

Lec. XIV. occasion to observe. now it is altogether
 as easie for the supreme deitie to commission
 some one or other of these beings to appear
 in our world, and to take up his abode
 amongst us for a time, and for the answer-
 ing such or such a salutarie and useful pur-
 pose, as it was for him to appoint any of
 us our habitation and stated residence here.
 so that there is nothing that can be in the
 least degree absurd in supposing that some
 such being may have appeared in our world
 in order to publish the doctrines of religion
 amongst mankind under the sanction of a
 distinct and special authoritie for this pur-
 pose confered upon him. but how, may
 some be inclined to say, is his authoritie to
 be evinced? how are we to be satisfied that
 he does appear in our world invested with
 such a divine commission? now this can
 only be made evident by such miraculous
 works already hinted at in this view, "by
 you, my good children;" such extraordi-
 narie, unaccustomed operations, as cannot
 be accounted for by any apparent powers of
 nature, and which tend to engage the at-
 tention of mankind to the doctrines of such
 a teacher, and to diffuse the knowlege and
 reception of them throughout the world,
 the

the design of which therefore we cannot but Lxc. XIV.
suppose to be the pointing him out to us as a
special and divine teacher, and the giving
success to the doctrines he should deliver.
these doctrines we cannot imagine would ever
have been in such an especial manner at-
tested, countenanced and supported by heaven
itself, were they not in reality both true and
of the utmost importance to mankind. nor
can any thing be more clear and evident
than the possibility of such miraculous events
or operations. for the whole system of na-
ture we know to be the workmanship of
God. and what more naturally supposable,
than that he can cause whatever deviations he
thinks proper from the usual course and
order of nature, which may constitute so
many miracles to us, though an original
part in the plan of his universal govern-
ment, as much as the natural state itself of
the world and its events. and to say that
the supreme being cannot cause miracles to
be performed or to take place, would be as
great an absurditie as to say, that he who
makes a watch cannot pull it to pieces, or
make it go faster or slower as he thinks fit,
or suspend its motions, or alter in this man-
ner or that, the form, contexture and work-
manship

Lec. XIV. manship of it. the continuance of our being is every moment owing to the immediate and instantaneous power of the deitie, exerted for the support of it. can it then be doubted, whether that being, by whose power millions and millions of creatures are thus in the common and ordinary course of nature continued in existence, should not be able, if he thinks fit, instantly to heal, or impower another in this manner to heal, the diseases of any among mankind, and so to continue and lengthen out their lives? our very life itself we have originally from God. he is the giver and author of it. now must we not needs believe that it is altogether as easy to him to restore life in this or that particular instance, if such be his will and pleasure, as it was at first to give it? can it ever be thought impossible to that being instantly, if he pleases, to suspend the influence of the winds, to whose power alone, every moment exerted, it is owing that they have any influence at all? or that he, to whose continued agencie in supporting the usual operations of nature, we must needs ascribe the nourishing qualitie of all our food, should be able to communicate it in any other manner he shall

shall think proper, and with equal ease, to LEG. XIV.
 a smaller as to a larger portion of it, even
 in the same degree; or make the bread itself
 to increase and multiply with as much ease
 as the grain or seed, from the produce of
 which it is made. so far then we seem to
 be upon very certain grounds advanced.
 but though the possibilitie of such a reve-
 lation, as that which is now the subject of
 our discourse, be indeed a necessary step in
 the argument, yet must it needs be the low-
 est. let it therefore be added; that such a
 revelation is not only possible but highly
 credible. that is to say, all things consi-
 dered and duly weighed, nothing can to our
 reflection appear more *likely*, than that the Likely.
 divine being should, in some such manner
 as we christians suppose he actually has,
 revele himself to mankind; at least there
 can be nothing in such a supposition carry-
 ing in it the very lowest degree of impro-
 babilitie; so that we cannot reasonably be
 surpris'd at hearing of such a thing. for
 consider only the prevalence in the world
 of iniquitie, and the numerous temptations
 to it; the various afflictions and sorrows of
 human life, and the need we have of sup-
 port and comfort under them. consider on

Lxxc. XIV.  the other hand, the blessings and joys of a virtuous life, and the vast, unspeakable felicitie of making a continual progress in it. consider these things, I say, and then judge whether it be not a most natural presumption, that a God of infinite benignitie and goodness should in such a manner revele himself to us, as to afford us some additional aid and assistance in our virtuous progress, and for enabling us the better both to encounter the temptations of life, and to bear its ills ; and after a manner more sublime and elevated to enjoy the pleasures of virtue and religion. in the system of animal and external nature we find a very kind provision made for *incidental* wants and distempers, such as men may have brought upon themselves, or that may have befallen them through the inconsideration, folly or injustice of others, or by means of any afflictions, which may have come upon them with little or no pre-apprehension of any such matter, yet without either their own, or the fault of any one besides, as well as for the *stated* wants of nature, and the infirmities originally belonging to our frame. why then should it be thought incredible that God may have furnished us with the like

like salutarie and graciously intended medi- Lec. XIV.
cines for our souls infirmities and for the
diseases of the mind? that in fact he has
done this by the appearance of Christ Jesus
in our world, and the nature and qualities
of his gracious prescriptions in this kind,
shall, God willing, be the business of our
next meeting upon this occasion, to evince.

LECTURE XV.

WE have already made it to appear Lect. XV.
that such a divine revelation as
that we suppose to be contained in the
gospel, is a thing possible, or what very
well may be. we have likewise shewn it
to be a thing credible; or that it is at least
no way improbable that it should be. the
next step in this argument is those ancient Ancient
Prophecies.
prophecies, which for many ages preceding
the actual publication of the gospel to man-
kind, declared that it would be. these
prophecies are contained in the writings of
the old testament. thus it is that we are to
distinguish on account of several, and those
very

LECT. XV. very remarkable, predictions, which we meet
 with in the new. with respect then to those of
 the old testament, by which the appearance
 of our blessed savior amongst mankind was
 prefigured and pointed out, they were in-
 tended in the first place for the comfort and
 entertainment, the satisfaction and joy of
 those to whom they were originally deli-
 vered. this is plain from what you, “ my
 “ good children, may remember our blef-
 “ sed savior himself to have declared con-
 Abraham. “ cerning Abraham, who lived so many
 “ ages before the coming of Christ into
 “ our world, that he *saw his day and was*
 “ *glad.* what do you think can be the
 “ meaning of Abraham’s *seeing Christ’s*
 “ *day?* it must surely mean his foreseeing
 “ in consequence of a divine revelation
 “ that had been given him for that purpose,
 “ that at such an appointed time some il-
 “ lustrious messenger from heaven would
 “ appear among men, would assume the
 “ character of a savior, and in a most glori-
 “ ous sense and in an absolutely complete
 “ and perfect manner fulfil it. well therefore
 “ may it be added that he *was glad.* and
 “ let me more particularly observe it to you
 “ by the way, that this joy of his must
 “ needs

“ needs have been of the benevolent kind ; Lect. XV.
 “ it flowed from a generous, public spirit,
 “ and the delight he took in the common
 “ good and general welfare of his brethren
 “ of mankind. the most distant posteritie
 “ he considered in that light. and there-
 “ fore he rejoiced in Christ’s day for the
 “ sake and in behalf of those, who after
 “ so long a succession of years, were to
 “ enjoy the benefit and light of it. and
 “ this I mention in order to shew you, that
 “ it is to be one exercise of your benevo-
 “ lence and friendship towards mankind to
 “ be pleased and delighted with whatever
 “ good is befalling any of your fellow-
 “ creatures, whether it be by means of your
 “ own endeavors or those of another ; or
 “ whether it be in the course and order of
 “ divine providence, without the interven-
 “ tion of any human instrumentalitie at
 “ all. nay, as the instance and example
 “ before us does indeed so particularly sig-
 “ nifie and point out, you are not only to
 “ *rejoice with them that do rejoice*, but even
 “ with them that shall rejoice, when you
 “ can have any probable or certain pre-
 “ apprehension of it.”

Such

LECT. XV. Such was the case of Abraham with respect to gospel-times or the christian revelation. for these prophecies, this knowledge communicated to him concerning these far distant events must needs have been miraculous. it was altogether as impossible that he should know of these things so long beforehand without a miracle, as that without a miracle the sick and dying should be instantly healed, or the dead raised to life. and by whom can we suppose such extraordinary and special knowledge to have been communicated to any of mankind, but by that supreme being himself, who has “kept
 “ the times and seasons within his own
 “ power,” and from whom alone therefore it could procede? when therefore it was in this manner declared unto Abraham, “ that
 “ in his seed all the nations of the earth
 “ should be blessed” ; that is, in and by Christ Jesus, who was to descend from him, he might most certainly depend upon the truth of it; such a miraculous and special revelation of this far distant event being properly speaking a divine promise; the promise of a *God that cannot lie*. “ observe
 “ that, my good children, God is a being
 “ that *cannot lie*. from whence you may
 “ most

“ most certainly infer that you ought not LECT. XV.
 “ to lie, or to deceive another. for you
 “ are to be perfect as God your father who is
 “ in heaven, is perfect. and God cannot lie,
 “ because he is a being so perfect in the
 “ moral excellencie of his nature, as that
 “ he can never be disposed to it, so that
 “ the more like you are to God, the less
 “ prone you will be to lying; the more
 “ you will abhor it. at the same time you
 “ know how expressly it is made incumbent
 “ upon you by the sacred scriptures, that
 “ you be followers of God as dear children.”

But with respect to the prophecies we have been speaking of, they were ever and anon renewed; Moses had the foreknowledge of Christ's coming communicated to him from above as well as Abraham. and there are many of the psalms containing propheticall descriptions of his appearance and character; several of which are to be known by those quotations which are made from them as prophecies by our blessed savior and his apostles. by this means we learn that the second, twenty-second, and the hundred and tenth psalms contain prophecies of this kind, being refered to in this view by the writers of the new testament. but in those books

LECT. XV. books of the old which we particularly
 style prophetic, though they predict many
 other future events, and contain a great
 varietie of instructions and admonitions ad-
 dressed to those of the then present times,
 it is that we meet with the greatest varietie
 of clear and most remarkable descriptions
 given of our blessed savior, of the nature
 of his kingdom and the design of his ap-
 pearance. witness only the fifty-third chap-
 ter of Isaiah, in which we have a descrip-
 tion so exactly answering to what our savior
 did and taught and suffered, whilst here
 upon earth, which must very much surprise
 you, when you consider that it had been
 exhibited so many ages before he actually
 appeared amongst men. “and yet you are
 “not to imagine, my good children, that
 “this is so surprising as not to be believed;
 “for we ourselves, you and I and others,
 “often foretell things to come; that is to
 “say, we inform this or the other friend,
 “that on such or such a day, a week or a
 “month or two hence, we design to do so
 “or so, or to be at such or such a place;
 “and accordingly it very often so comes to
 “pass tho’ not always, because we are apt
 “to change our minds, or providence may
 “prevent

“ prevent our doing that which we still Lect. XV.
 “ design to do. now God knows all things
 “ from the begining even to the end, fu-
 “ ture as well as past, and as with him
 “ there is no *variableness or shadow of turn-*
 “ *ing*, whatever he designs will certainly
 “ come to pass, it not being in the power
 “ of any other being to prevent the execu-
 “ tion of it. and certainly whenever he
 “ thinks proper he can communicate to
 “ any of his creatures a knowlege of such
 “ designs, and cause them in prophetic
 “ language to be exhibited. for, it would
 “ be strange indeed that he, who has given
 “ us all our knowlege and our very capa-
 “ citie for knowlege and of communicating
 “ it to one another, should not himself be
 “ able to communicate it to us in this par-
 “ ticular branch or species of communica-
 “ tion, as well as in any other way. so
 “ that there is in realitie no more difficultie
 “ in apprehending that *God at sundry times*
 “ *spake unto the fathers by the prophets con-*
 “ *cerning Jesus Christ*, than there is in
 “ apprehending that one man may com-
 “ municate his intentions to another.” and
 surely it answered a very good purpose as
 already intimated. it was setting before the
 men

LECT. XV. men of those times a very pleasing and delightful prospect, and might afford in this respect the highest entertainment; the foresight of these glorious times being by no means confined to the person by whom the prophecy was originally delivered. others, who were credibly informed of it might safely depend upon its accomplishment, as well as he; so that every age would enjoy the benefit of those which had been delivered in that preceding, and as the number of them increased, their confidence in the accomplishment of the event would be so much the more confirmed. on all these accounts then we may justly say that christianitie was proved even before it had a being in the world; these prophecies being so many attestations given to it, as properly speaking, miraculous, as any of the miracles themselves recorded in the gospel. and then secondly, if they proved christianitie even to those who lived before the appearance of Christ in the world, and who could not have had it proved to them in any other way, they must certainly constitute a very great accession or increase of evidence in favor of it in these times succeeding his appearance. for they are still prophecies and
miracles

miracles still; and by a diligent and proper LECT. XV.
 consideration of them our idea of the evi-
 dence and proof attending it cannot but be
 prodigiously heightened and enlarged. (a)

But now farther, fourthly, as it is possible that such a revelation as that we supposed to be contained in the gospel might be given to mankind, as there is nothing improbable in supposing that it should, as it was foretold for many ages before that such a revelation would be communicated, so accordingly in the course and order of divine providence, and at the time appointed for it, this has actually been done. for the illustration of this particular there are four things to be considered, and to one or other of these heads every thing relating to the more direct and immediate proof of christianitie may properly and naturally be reduced. first, the character of its author; secondly, the nature and tendency of the doctrines which he taught: thirdly, the miracles by which these doctrines were attested and confirmed: and, fourthly, the manner

(a) *χρεία δὲ τῶν προκαταγγειλάντων αὐτῆς τὴν παρουσίαν πρὸς βεβαίωσιν τῆς αὐτῆς παρουσίας, ὅτι προκαλῆνγεται. Epiphani. Advers. Hæres. Lib. ii. Vol. i. p. 696.*

LECT. XV. manner in which the knowlege of these
 { things have been conveyed down to us.

Moral cha- first then, with respect to the character of
 racter. its author: this is a point of very high and
 considerable moment, not only on account
 of the example exhibited, but in relation
 more directly to the proof of his divine au-
 thoritie. nothing can be more unlikely than
 that the supreme deitie should commission
 any being of an immoral character to treat
 with mankind upon the great subject of re-
 ligion and a future life. there would be
 such an inaptitude and incongruitie in this
 case between the message and the messenger,
 as would by no means harmonise with the
 beautie of the divine conduct in other
 respects so apparent to mankind; so that
 from hence alone suspicions would very na-
 turally arise as to the realitie of the mes-
 sage. just in the same manner as if in
 common life any of us were to receive a
 pretended message from some friend of ours
 by a person to whom it appeared very im-
 probable that he should commit such an
 affair. the very character of the person
 would lead us to suspect a fraud. besides,
 one who plainly enough discovered himself
 to be of a corrupt disposition in other in-
 stances,

stances, we might naturally enough suppose to be guilty of a design to impose upon us a pretended revelation ; so that whatever such a person delivered, however excellent in itself, under the notion of a divine and specially reveled doctrine, and whatever seemingly strong attestations it might be attended with, still it would gain but little credit on account of those perpetual suspicions which we should be apt to entertain of some intended mischief lurking under these fair appearances, founded upon the immoral character of him assuming the prophetic office. supposing his message to be really divine, these suspicions would nevertheless take place. consequently the employing any one of such a character on the part of heaven in a message of this nature to mankind, would be a defeating of the very end proposed. he would be sent “ that he might be believed on in the “ world.” and yet, notwithstanding all his credentials, the badness of his character would naturally tend to prevent that belief. it is not therefore consistent either with the goodness or the wisdom of the divine being, that the author of such a revelation should be of a character like this. and on the other

LECT. XV. other hand, if any one declares himself to
 be such a divine prophet, and appeals to a
 great varietie of miraculous works by him
 performed in proof of that claim, and if
 at the same time he appears throughout the
 whole of his conduct to be a person, not
 merely of an inoffensive, but of an highly
 useful character, full of generosity, kind-
 ness, meekness, pietie and undaunted cou-
 rage in the cause of God and goodness,
 we immediately conclude, that, if God did
 indeed in any such manner discover and
 make known his will to mankind, it would
 surely be by the mediation or intervention
 of a person thus characterized and distin-
 guished. and from the goodness of his
 character in all other respects, we should
 naturally be led to look upon it as so much
 the more improbable that he should act the
 part of an impostor in relation to the mes-
 sage, which he declares himself to have
 been commissioned from above to deliver.
 but if in this case the character be not only
 highly excellent, but absolutely complete
 and perfect, the credibilitie of the prophe-
 tic claim is by this means prodigiously
 heightened. we see here an evident con-
 nexion between his example and his doc-
 trine ;

trine, which has all the appearance of be-LECT. XV.
 ing a regular and orderly scheme. they
 mutually enforce each other; and there is
 such an aspect of contrivance, wisdom and
 design in this as naturally betokens a reali-
 tie, and amounts to a very strong presump-
 tion of truth in the case. “now, my good
 children, these observations which we
 have last been making, are no other
 than a representation of the real cha-
 racter of our lord Jesus Christ. he was
 a person, not only inoffensive, but in
 the highest degree pious, benevolent and
 friendly in all his actions. his character
 was not only an excellent, but an abso-
 lutely perfect one. he was surrounded,
 you know, with enemies, who were
 always upon the watch against him,
 in order to find out if possible, some-
 thing unfavorable, something unpopu-
 lar, something odious and malignant to
 fasten upon him, but they could never
 do it. they could not *convince him of*
sin. he himself, notwithstanding all their
 malice, challenged them to do so. you
 see then, that of all persons that have
 ever appeared in our world, he was
 the most likely, on account of his own
 P “imme-

LECT. XV. “ immediate character, to be the author
 “ of a divine revelation to mankind, and
 “ the special minister of divine grace and
 “ mercy for our recoverie and salvation.
 “ and therefore when you find him actually
 “ to make this claim, you may the more
 “ readily assent to it. these things agree
 “ and harmonise so well as to be a natural
 “ ground of belief in the instance of such
 “ a claim advanced.” and now as to the
 second point or article in this argument ;
 the nature and tendencie of the doctrine
 delivered by our savior. it is a doctrine
 calculated to promote the highest good of
 men both here and hereafter. it teaches
 meekness and quietness, contentment and
 patience, to do good and to bear evil. it
 presents to the mind the most pleasing and
 delightful truths and contemplations. it
 recommends, and actually supplies us with,
 that knowlege, which is of all others the
 most useful and entertaining. it is intended
 to make us like God, and consequently to
 advance us to the truest and most sublime
 felicitie of our own beings. it gives us
 the most amiable views of the divine nature
 and providence, and thus cheers and sup-
 ports our minds under the afflictive dispen-
 sations

Christian
doctrine.

Genius and

fations of the present life. all these things LECT. XV.
 it inculcates not only so far, and upon the Tendency
 same principles, as did the light of nature ;
 but likewise by a great varietie of disco-
 veries that are peculiar to itself. disco-
 veries in relation to things, of which with-
 out it we could not possibly have had the of
 least notion or idea. every thing that it
 delivers to us concerning Jesus Christ him-
 self (a) and the Holy Spirit, and a great
 many

(a) The prodigiously high degree of moral force
 and energy accompanying these discoveries, so far
 as relates to the person, character and offices of
 our lord Jesus Christ, will perhaps better appear
 from the following soliloquy than by any formal
 modes of argumentative illustration. “o sweet
 “ Jesus! o amiable lord! whither through ex-
 “ cessive grief I should turn mine heart, I know
 “ not; when I consider what abject and bitter
 “ things thou hast undergone for my sins. and
 “ who can be of so cold and obdurate an heart,
 “ that this love of our redeemer does not in-
 “ flame? to the end that he might deliver us
 “ from the pains to which we were liable thro’
 “ sin, himself suffered the pains due unto sin.
 “ o most merciful God! what shall we render
 “ to thee for this thine unspeakable grace and
 “ charitie! we formerly, indeed, admired much
 “ that thou wouldst vouchsafe to debase thyself
 “ so far, as to take our human nature upon
 “ thee, to be born in a stable, to be laid in a
 P 2 “ manger;

LECT. XV. many particulars in relation to the heavenly
 { world are peculiar to this dispensation; as
 also the institutions of baptism and the
 lord's supper, both of them so admirably
 fitted for cherishing and invigorating the
 divine and heavenly life within us. (a) and
 all

“manger; but when we consider the humilitie
 “of thy passion, in which thou disdainedst not
 “to be contemned and trampled upon like a vile
 “worm of the earth, we even faint away thro’
 “admiration.” See Meditations upon the Pas-
 sion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; set
 forth by J. C. London, 1695. p. 42, 43. “this
 “being so, as we have it expressed, *ibid.* p. 102,
 “103, how is it possible we should ever forget
 “this immense charitie? it is truly a wonder
 “our hearts are not wholly dissolved in the love
 “of him. it is a wonder we can ever cease
 “from praise and thanksgiving! how can we
 “consent to love any thing besides him, whose
 “excess of love is so great towards us? how can
 “we entertain any other thoughts or cares than
 “to return love for love? why do we refuse to
 “suffer for his sake, who suffered so much for
 “ours? how comes it to pass we scarce vouch-
 “safe even to *think* of what he so willingly
 “acted and endured for us? o most sweet Jesu!
 “what piety overcomes thee? what charity
 “hath vanquished thine heart, that for us most
 “vile sinners, thou shouldst undergo so bitter
 “and ignominious a passion?”

(a) “The bread indeed, says an ancient
 “writer, is meer food alone, but there is in it
 “never-

all these things do in a wonderfully pleaf-LECT.XV.
ing and delightful manner concur to raife
our

“ nevertheless a life-giving power.” so like-
wise with respect to baptism; “ a mere outward
“ ablution is not the thing intended; but that
“ by the power of the water operating in a
“ way of lively faith and active hope in a due
“ performance of the sacred rite; and by means
“ of the holy names employed, it may become
“ perfective of our salvation.” βρώσις μὲν ὁ ἄρτος,
ἡ δὲ δύναμις ἐν ἀνθρώποις ζωογονήσιν. καὶ οὐκ ἵνα τὸ
ὔδωρ ἡμᾶς καθάριση μόνον, ἀλλ’ ἵνα ἐν τῇ ἰσχύϊ τῆ
ὔδατος διὰ τῆς πίστεως, καὶ ἐνεργείας, καὶ ἐλπίδος,
καὶ μυσηρίων τελειώσῃς, καὶ ὀνομασίας τῆς ἁγιασίας,
γενῇται ἡμῶν εἰς τελείωσιν σωτηρίας. Eriphanii Ana-
cephal. Op. Vol. II. p. 154. it is on account
of such excellent effects arising from the due
celebration of these ordinances, as well as the
illustrious character of the great institutor of
them, that St. Basil, speaking of baptism in
particular, calls it *most glorious* baptism, and
most admirable baptism. ἐνδοξοτάτου βαπτισματος
— & — τῆ θαυμασιωτάτου βαπτισματος. De Bap-
tismo, L. I. c. ii. Op. Vol. I. p. 643. what,
says the pious archbishop Leighton, was that
other-sacrament (baptism) and this (the Lord’s
supper) but coverts, under which Christ conveys
himself and his graces to the *believing* soul,
while the prophane and slight-hearted are sent
away with empty elements. See his eighteen
Sermons, N^o 8. p. 135. to the same sense, so far
as relates to the holy supper, we have a learned
catechist expressing himself. A. *qualis autem ea*

LECT. XV. our conceptions of the majesty and goodness of the divine being, to make us more in love with religion and virtue, to inspire our hearts with a fervent charitie, and to produce the greatest trust and confidence in the almightie lord and governor of the universe. so that in short, christianitie is exactly such a system of religion as we might naturally suppose, and most probably presume a divinely authorised teacher and instructor of mankind to introduce, if ever such an one should really appear. and considered in this view the doctrine of christianitie goes a great way towards proving itself. when a person lays claim to a divine commission for teaching a doctrine like this,

and

debet esse commemoratio B. non tantum historica, in summis aut labris aut cerebro fluida (quæ hypocritarum & maxime impiorum esse potest) sed *practica & affectuosa*, quæ vim quandam salutarem animæ *fideli* alte imprimit ac infigit. A. *id explica uberius*. B. talis esse debet Christi in cœna sua recordatio, quæ 1º. *crucifixi* domini amoris erga se melitissimo sensu participantis animum pascit, & cœlesti voluptate perfundat. 2º. quæ amoris vicissim erga Christum igniculos in corde communicantis exsuscitet, & in illius laudes meritissimas & obsequium rapiat. 3º. quæ charitate flagret in *proximum*, maxime in domesticos fidei: *Tullii Enchirid.* p. 130, 131.

and works miracles in proof of it, against LECT. XV.
 which there is no exception lying, as to }
 the truth and realitie of them, how can we
 hesitate about the admitting of such a claim
 or embracing the doctrine? what obstruc-
 tion or impediment can there be to our
 assent? but this leads us to the third parti-
 cular mentioned in this argument; namely,
 the miracles of the gospel, as wrought both Miracles.
 by our savior and his apostles. these were
 very great and numerous. they were
 wrought in the most public manner ima-
 ginable. they were very different in the kind
 and species of them, and for the most part
 such as upon the very first view and appear-
 ance of them we cannot but conclude to be
 absolutely above the powers of nature, and
 beyond the utmost reach of human subtile-
 tie, art or contrivance. such as the heal-
 ing at a distance and in a moment; and
 raising the dead to life. the miracles in
 these several kinds were repeted again and
 again. and there was always a great num-
 ber of our savior's enemies at hand, who
 would have been glad, if they could, to
 have detected him in any fraud; and who
 had all the opportunitie they themselves
 could desire of doing this, had there been

LECT. XV. occasion given in the nature or the manner

of the performance; and yet it was not done. “ now, my good children, I think
 “ you will easily apprehend, that if a per-
 “ son takes upon him to work miracles,
 “ and declares that he does so, and affords
 “ others the fairest opportunitie for exa-
 “ mining into the truth and realitie of
 “ them, and if vast numbers at the very
 “ time and place, when and in which these
 “ miracles are said to have been wrought,
 “ are quite eager to lay hold of this op-
 “ portunitie, and to examine into the truth
 “ of them with the greatest strictness and
 “ accuracie, and if these very persons
 “ would have been beyond measure glad to
 “ have found that they were not true and
 “ genuine miracles, and yet after all this
 “ examination declare them to be true and
 “ genuine, as our savior’s enemies did with
 “ respect to those that were performed by
 “ him, you must needs think and believe
 “ them to be so; you must see surely the
 “ necessity of admitting them as such, if
 “ you would act like rational beings. and,
 “ if upon such evidence we are not to be-
 “ lieve, I know not how we can rationally
 “ believe any matter of fact at all.” we
 have already observed too that prophecies
 are

are a species or a distinct sort of miracles. LECT. XV.
 and of this kind there are several, as has
 before been intimated, which we meet
 with in the New Testament as delivered New Tes-
 tament
 prophecies.
 by our blessed savior and his apostles. the
 destruction of Jerusalem, for example, was
 foretold by our savior himself, according
 to what we find recorded in the twenty-
 fourth chapter of St. Matthew, the thir-
 teenth of St. Mark, and the twenty-first
 chapter of St. Luke, in so great a varietie
 of plain, expressive, distinguishing parti-
 culars, as are not capable of being applied
 to any other event, but exactly answering
 to that. so that, as it is plain that our
 savior in what is recorded by the several
 evangelists in those chapters, did indeed
 design to deliver a prophesie, it must needs
 too be evident that it could be no other
 than a prophesie of the destruction of that
 city ; which did accordingly, and in the
 manner there described come to pass. so
 likewise the apostles foretold the appear-
 ance and establishment of poperie in the
 christian world so many hundred years be-
 fore it took place ; an event so extremely
 improbable in itself, that it could never
 enter into any man's imagination to forge
 a pro-

LECT. XV. a prophesie of that kind. and, if it had, it is scarcely possible he should have hit upon so many circumstances of similitude as are apparent between poperie as now actually existing in the world, and poperie as we have it described by St. Paul and in the book of revelation. now all these prophesies (a) and miracles have in fact given the highest credit and authoritie to christianitie, insomuch that by means of them, as was naturally to be imagined, the whole world in a manner has been led to the knowlege of it. “and can you, my children, believe that God should by such extraordinary methods of his providence teach men a falshood?” but this leads

us

(a) It is to be observed too, that as prophesie does thus strongly enforce the authoritie of the christian religion in general, so is it naturally corroborative of the doctrine of a future state in particular. this is ingeniously urged by Erasmus. quid multis? quum omnia sic evenerint quemadmodum erant prædicta, de supremo iudicio, deque piorum & impiorum præmiis quicquam addubitare videtur esse extremæ cæcitat. homini divino credimus, si ter quaterque verum prædixit: & ei quam in tam multis, tamque juxta sensum humanum incredibilibus, fuit veridicus, non credemus in uno quod restat? *In Symbolum*, cap. v. p. 198, 199.

us to reflect, in the fourth place, upon the Lect. XV. manner in which the knowlege of these Historical things has been conveyed to ourselves. now it is an undeniable fact, that such a vast number of converts as we have just now been speaking of, were actually made by the preaching of the gospel. and yet it was a religion, which for a great number of years after its first publication, no man could profess without exposing himself to great sufferings and dangers, and even to death itself. for the sake of it how- Attestations, ever, notwithstanding all these dangers, such the vast, amazing number who renounced the principles in which they had been educated, which had all the force and authoritie of all the kings and princes and priests of the earth in favor of them; and christianitie all this force and weight of authoritie against it. so that it appears utterly impossible to account for the conduct of these primitive converts to the christian faith, without supposing that there were really such miraculous attestations given to it as out-weighed all these temporal and political considerations. for there were no temporal or political considerations on the other side, that could effect it. either there-

LECT. XV. therefore christianitie must be true, or here
is a great palpable event, a permanent appearance in the world which we are not able any way to account for, but for which, supposing christianitie to be true, the most natural and obvious reasons may be assigned. besides, through a vast number of writings that have been published to the world since the time when it is said to have been first made known down to the present age, the knowlege of it is in fact to be traced and observed, according to the account given of it in the New Testament. in every age we find christianitie, and meet with it in historie, owned and acknowledged among mankind, just in such a manner as we must suppose, admitting the writings of the New Testament to be authentic. out of which writings there are in the ancient books of this kind, a vast number of quotations exactly answering to such and such passages now to be met with in that book; and these passages are quoted as from authors of undoubted credit and authoritie. this therefore proves two things, both that the evangelists and apostles were looked upon as credible writers, and that their writings have been faithfully and truly transmitted down

down to our times. and they all of them LECT. XV.
 assert the miracles of Christ, and the autho-
 ritie of what he declared, delivered and
 made known to mankind. the latter fol-
 lows of course from the former, and of the
 former they were very capable judges.
 many of them were actually eye-witnesses
 of these miraculous performances, and the
 rest lived at the very time, and on the very
 spot where these miracles were wrought,
 and had the best means of knowing whe-
 ther they were true and genuine miracles
 or not. and these very preachers of chri-
 stianitie exposed themselves to every ima-
 ginable difficultie and suffering for the sake
 of it. what should induce them to do this,
 if they did not believe it to be true? “ you Dismission.
 “ do not, my good children, see men now
 “ a-days exposing themselves to pain and
 “ tortures and povertie and death itself
 “ for nothing; and yet the apostles did so,
 “ unless christianitie be true. for there is
 “ nothing else but the truth of that doc-
 “ trine, which could have induced them
 “ to act the part they did. this then you
 “ may conclude, that it is a *faithful*, that
 “ is a credible and well-attested *saying*,
 “ and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ
 “ Jesus

LECT. XV. “ *Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*
 “ you may not perhaps enter at present
 “ into the force of all that I have been
 “ saying upon this head, or be able to re-
 “ collect it exactly. but I hope that it
 “ may be the means of exciting your
 “ curiositie hereafter to enquire a little
 “ into these things, and even of leading
 “ you to apprehend at present that there
 “ is some good reason to be given for that
 “ reverence with which we desire you to
 “ be attending to those instructions that
 “ are given to you in the bible; and if
 “ any thing of this kind should happily
 “ be effected, I shall have obtained mine
 “ aim: this at least I hope you will con-
 “ clude, that I do for mine own part ap-
 “ prehend, that there is a very sure foun-
 “ dation for the belief and principles of
 “ religion; so that you may depend upon
 “ it for the future that I am greatly in
 “ earnest when I call upon you to be and
 “ to do good, to *live soberly, righteously and*
 “ *godly in this present world*, to love devo-
 “ tion, prayer and the public worship of
 “ God, and to *search the scriptures*. nay,
 “ though you should forget every thing
 “ that I have said, yet thus much I hope
 “ you

“ you will remember, that I used to come LECT. XV.
“ to you from time to time, and employ
“ myself in endeavoring to convey some
“ useful instruction into your minds. and
“ this will put you upon asking your pa-
“ rents, or others that may be able to in-
“ form you what it was that I was used
“ then to discourse about. this I can as-
“ sure you of, that I shall always reflect
“ with pleasure upon the part I have borne
“ in this evening exercise, out of the real
“ concern that I have for your best interests
“ and highest good, and from the hearty
“ wish of my soul, that you may be a *seed*
“ *to serve the lord, and be accounted unto him*
“ *for a generation* ; that you may not any
“ of you be a *grief to your father, or a bit-*
“ *terness to her that bare you*, but that you
“ may be to them as *olive-plants around*
“ *their table*, and like the pleasant vines or
“ fragrant flowers of the garden.”

THE END.

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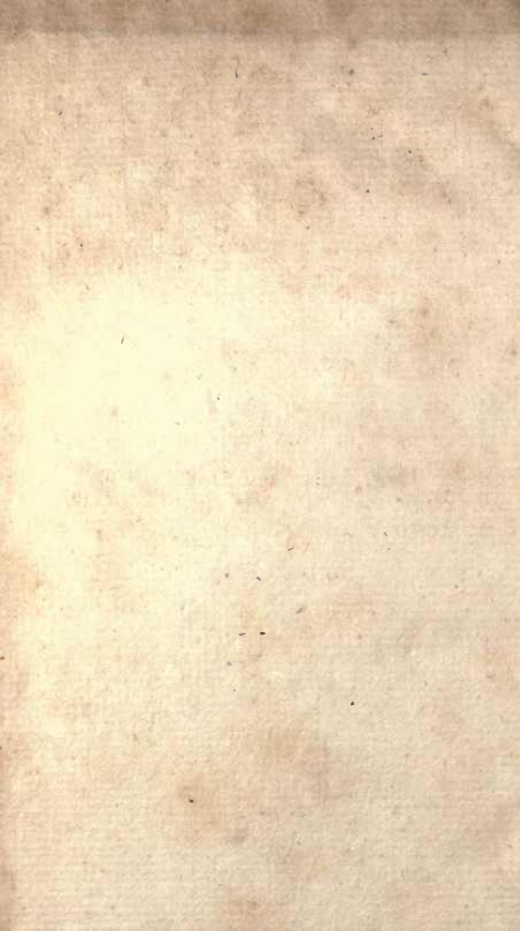
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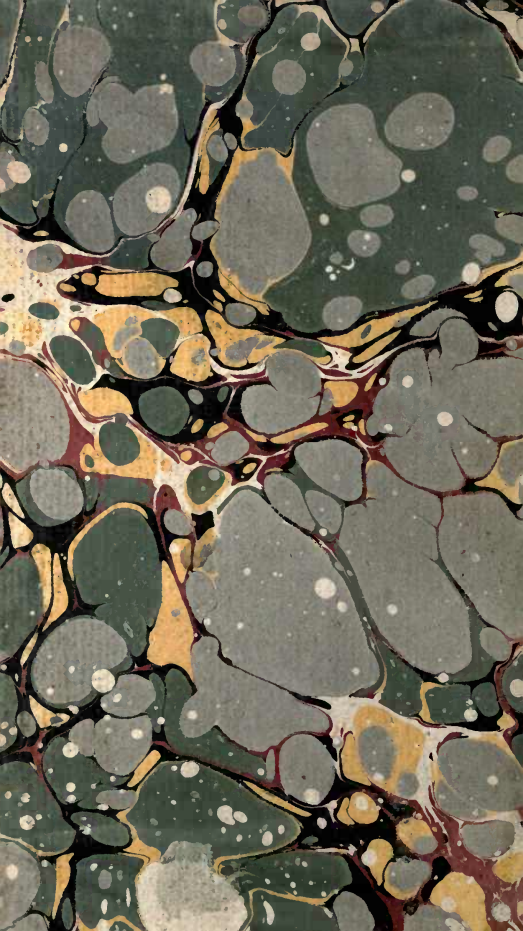
Letter of the Hon. the Secy. of the Navy to the Hon. the Secy. of the Treasury
dated 10th Decr. 1864.

Referring to the report of the Hon. the Secy. of the Navy
dated 10th Decr. 1864, and to the report of the Hon. the Secy. of the Treasury
dated 10th Decr. 1864, in relation to the proposed purchase of the
Hull of the U. S. S. "Albatross" for the purpose of being converted into a
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